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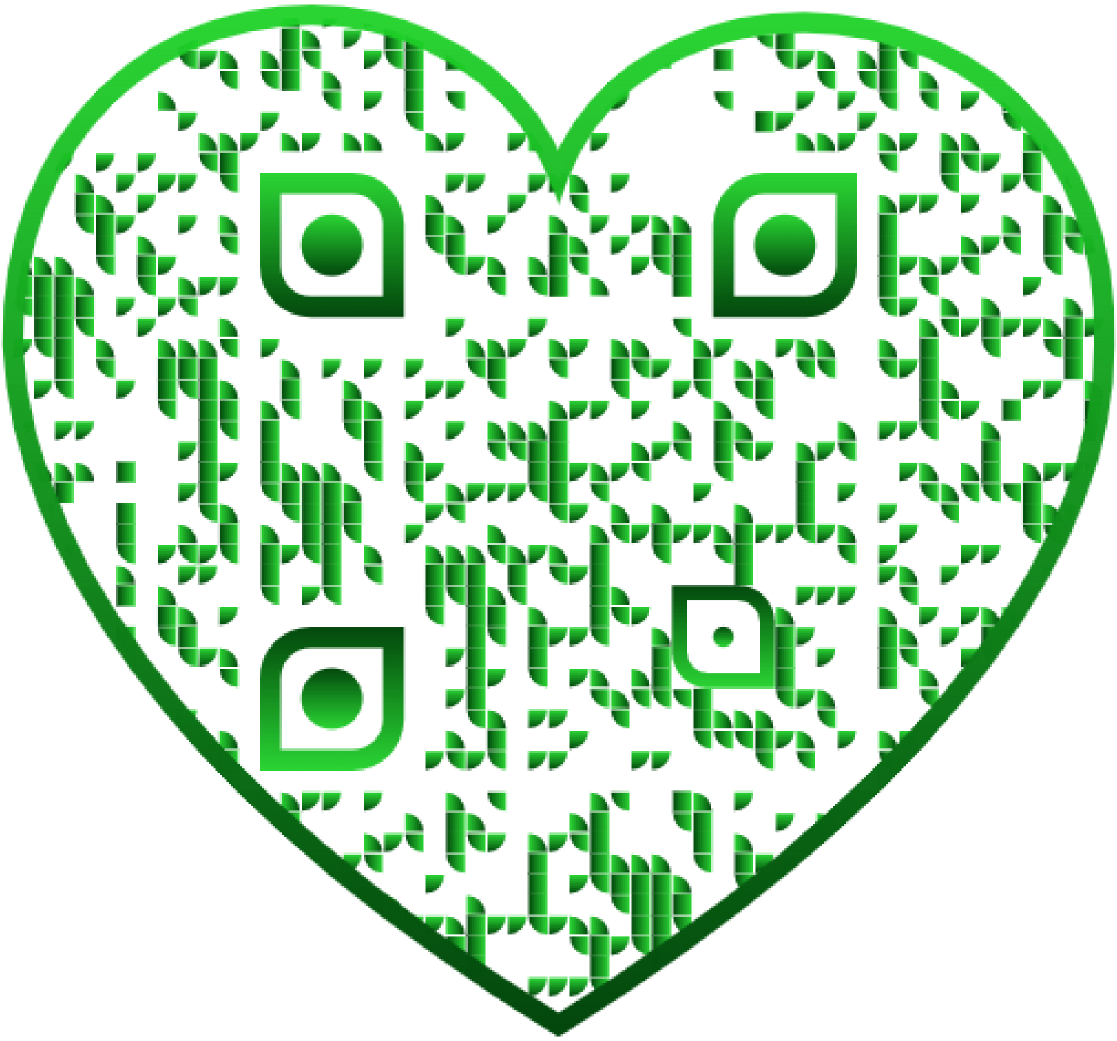

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1972 NOVA DISC BRAKE UPGRADE

ON THE COVER

Early Novas continue their rise in popularity in today's muscle car world, and Tim Buck's immaculate 1967 model takes style and performance to a whole new level. Check out the full feature starting on page 16. Image by Josh Mishler.

All Chevy Performance ISSN 2767-5068 (print) ISSN 2767-5076 (online) Issue 50 is published monthly by In the Garage Media, 370 E. Orangethorpe Avenue, Placentia, CA 92870-6502. Postage paid at Placentia, CA. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: All Chevy Performance c/o In the Garage Media, 1350 E. Chapman Ave #6550, Fullerton, CA 92834-6550 or email ITGM at subscription@inthegaragemedia.com. Copyright (c) 2025 IN THE GARAGE MEDIA. Printed in the USA. The All Chevy Performance trademark is a registered trademark of In The Garage Media.

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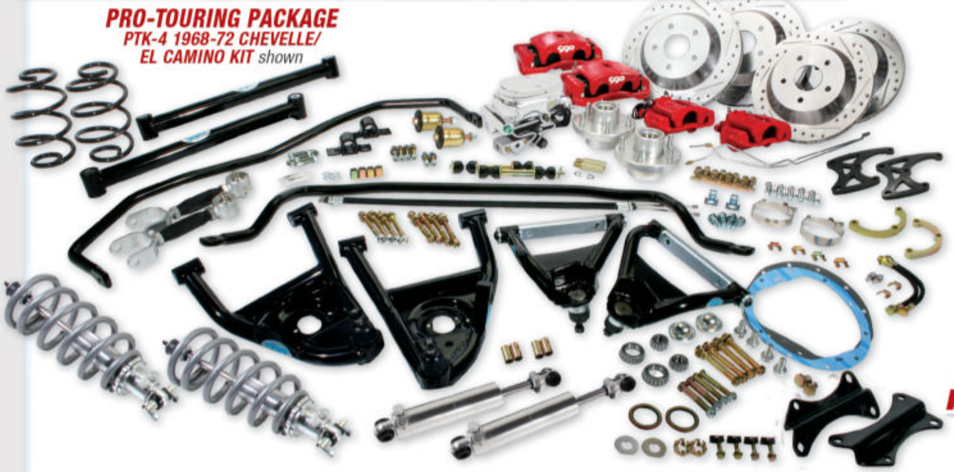

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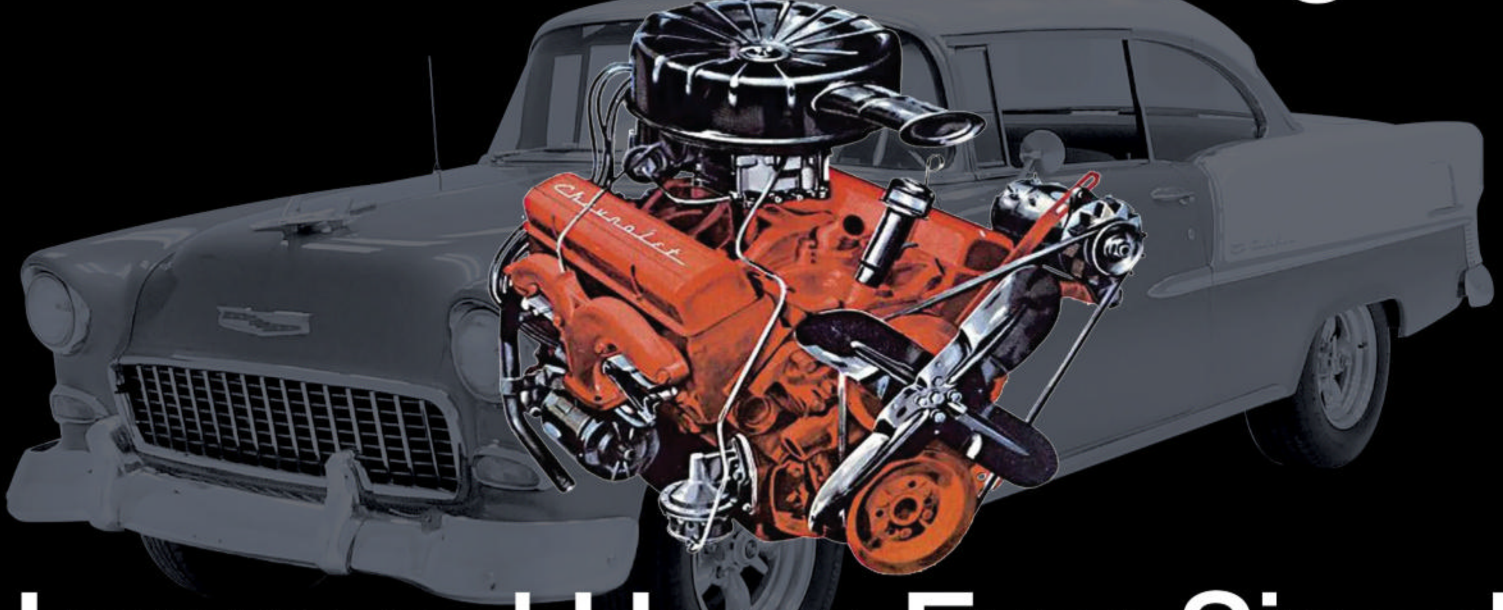

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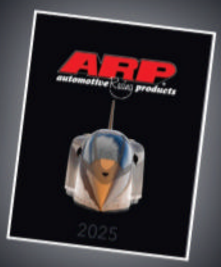

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BY **NICK LICATA**

HOME RUNS, AND HEROES, AND SEMA

As I scribe this month's editorial, it's a few days post SEMA and I'm attempting to unpack some of the happenings from the event, which includes recalling the many conversations that took place with the plethora of industry folks. It's all still a blur that generally takes weeks for me to process. Heck, at my age remembering only half of what went down ain't as easy as it used to be, but I always recognize the importance of SEMA and what it does for the aftermarket industry.

The first SEMA Show took place in 1967 in the basement of Dodger Stadium. It was a relatively modest event that featured around 98 exhibitors and attracted roughly 3,000 attendees. This was 57 years before Freddie Freeman's unforgettable walk-off grand slam against the New York Yankees in the 10th inning of Game 1 of the 2024 World Series, an achievement that will forever mark Freeman's legacy in baseball history, which happened at the very same venue.

As that memorable home run is sure to shape the minds of young baseball fans for a lifetime, the SEMA Show plays an important role in determining the direction of the automotive aftermarket industry. Just as SEMA has done since its humble beginnings, it still brings an outstanding number of new performance products and muscle car builds that influence future projects. In some instances, those influences can be small incremental pieces less noticeable at first glance, while other large aspects make bold statements that can overshadow the subtle details.

While it's sometimes the wild, extreme, and shiny things that grab our attention, I tend to focus on the subtle touches that bring to life the larger things. Whether it's a finely tucked bumper or precise hood and door gaps, those things can sometimes get overlooked by the casual enthusiast but are the aspects I appreciate most, as I know skilled fabricators spend so much time and effort painstakingly perfecting those details before any build leaves their shop, especially if that build is being shown at SEMA. The bodyworkers and metal fabricators are the true heroes of the hot rodding world.

Speaking of heroes, as I sit here reminiscing about all the beautiful cars from SEMA, it's Veteran's Day 2024, so I'd like to draw attention to all the Veterans and active-duty military members who have made and continue to make tremendous sacrifices while protecting our country and allowing us the freedom to enjoy driving our classic cars, attend car shows and events like SEMA, and witness bottom-of-the-10th, walk-off home runs. Without your selfless heroics, none of these freedoms would be available to us.

To all the active-duty and military Veterans, you are the true heroes of this country, and on behalf of us in the Chevy muscle car hobby, thank you for your service.

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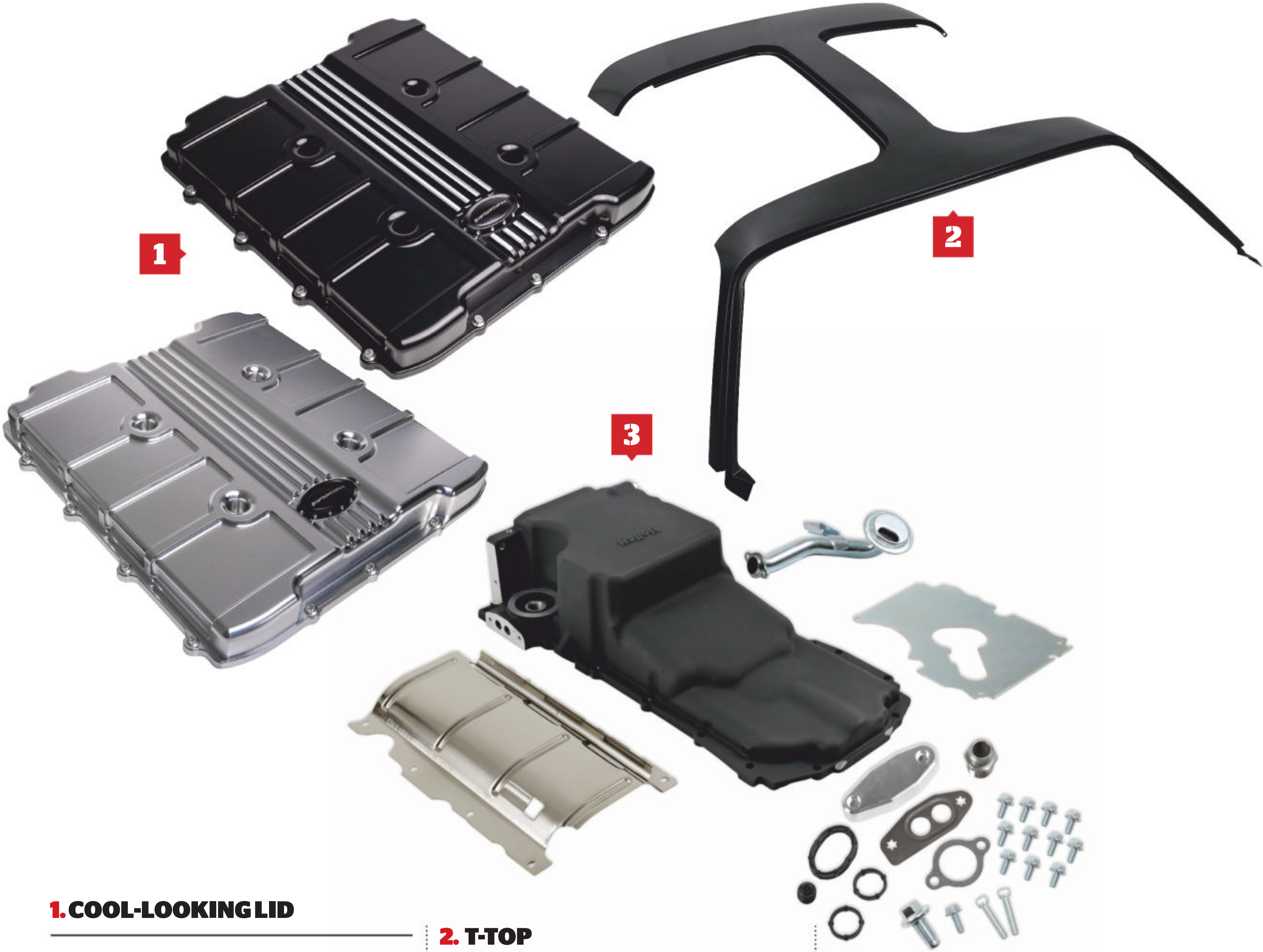

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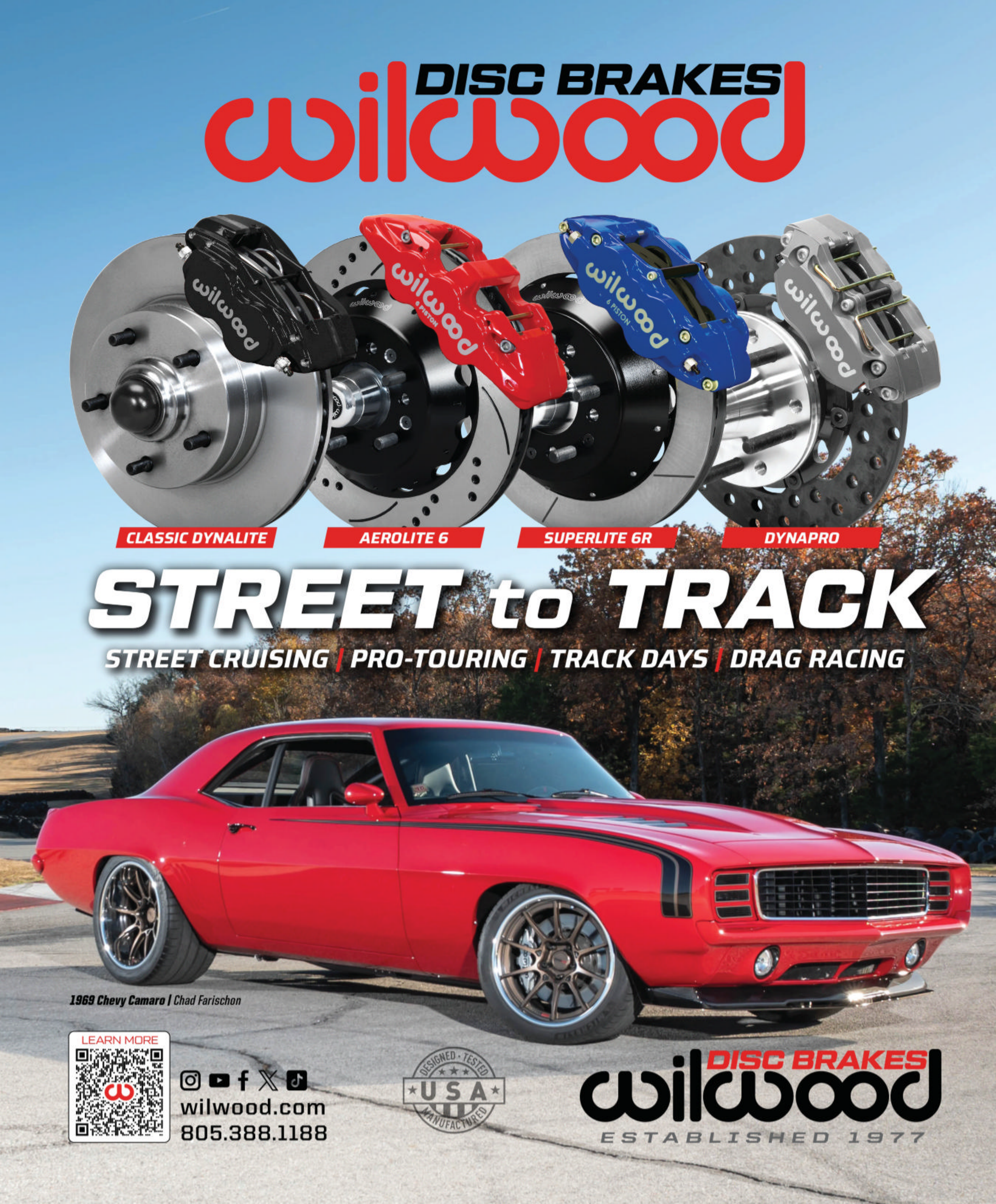

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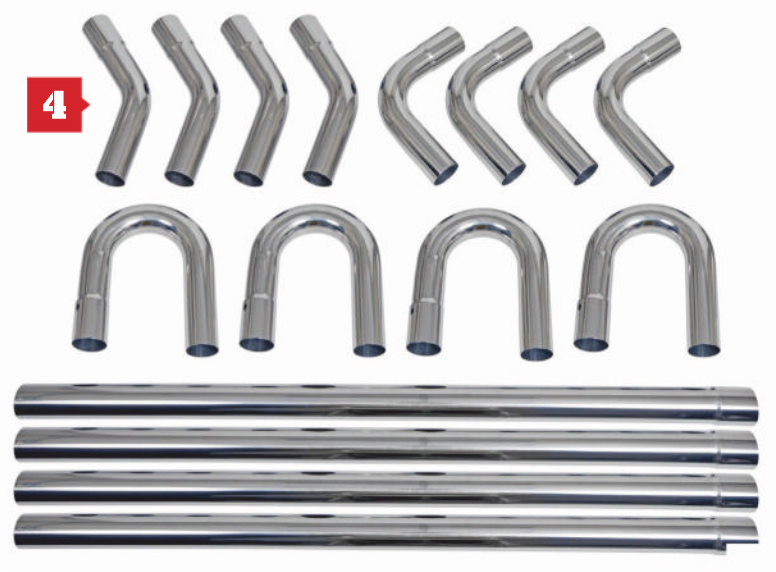

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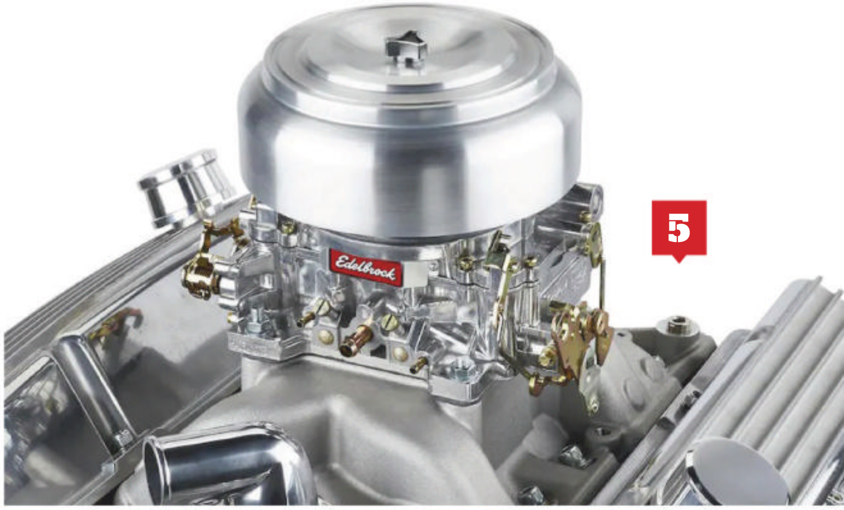

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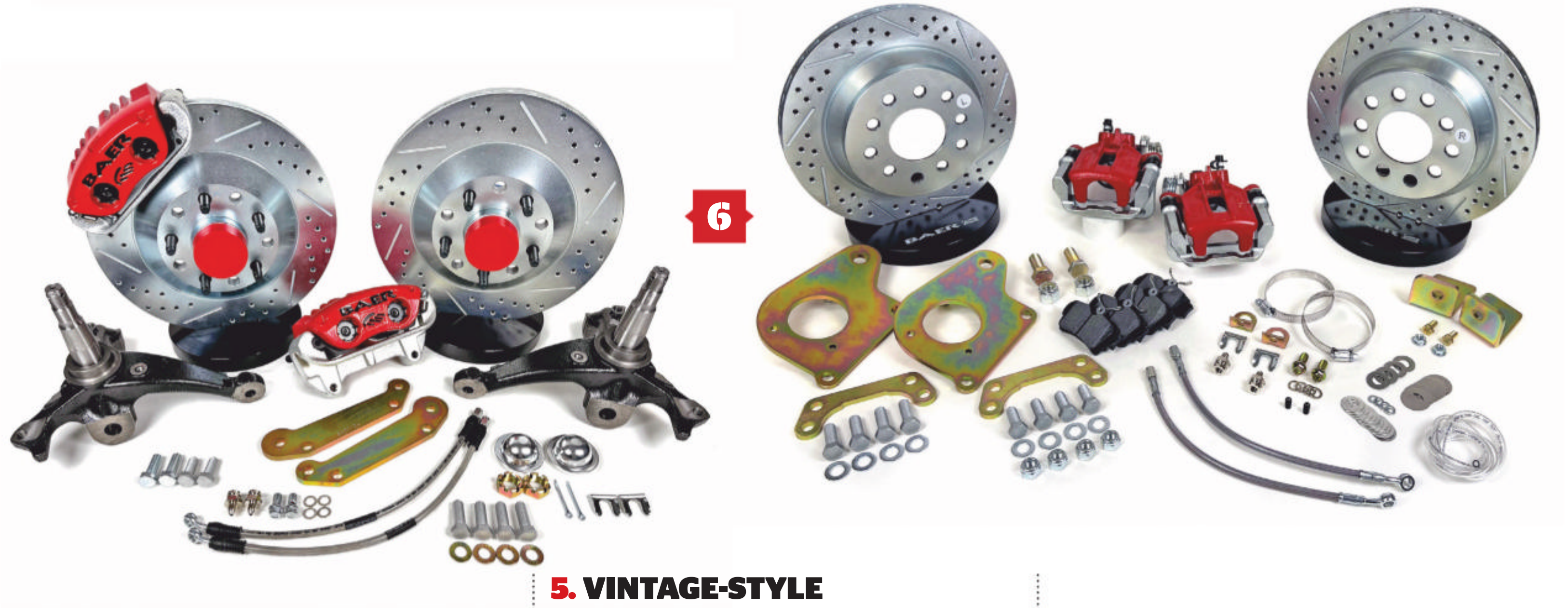

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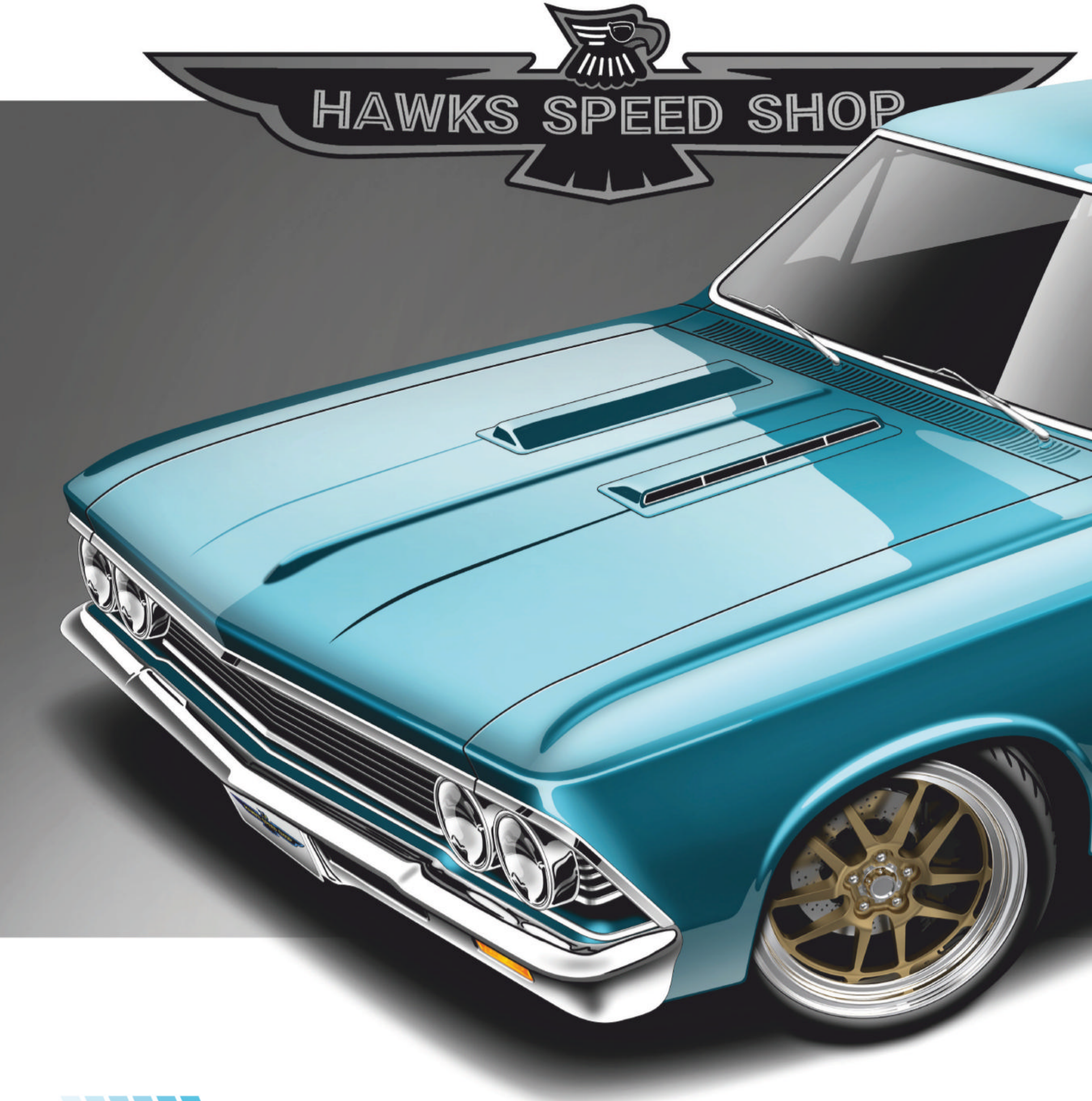
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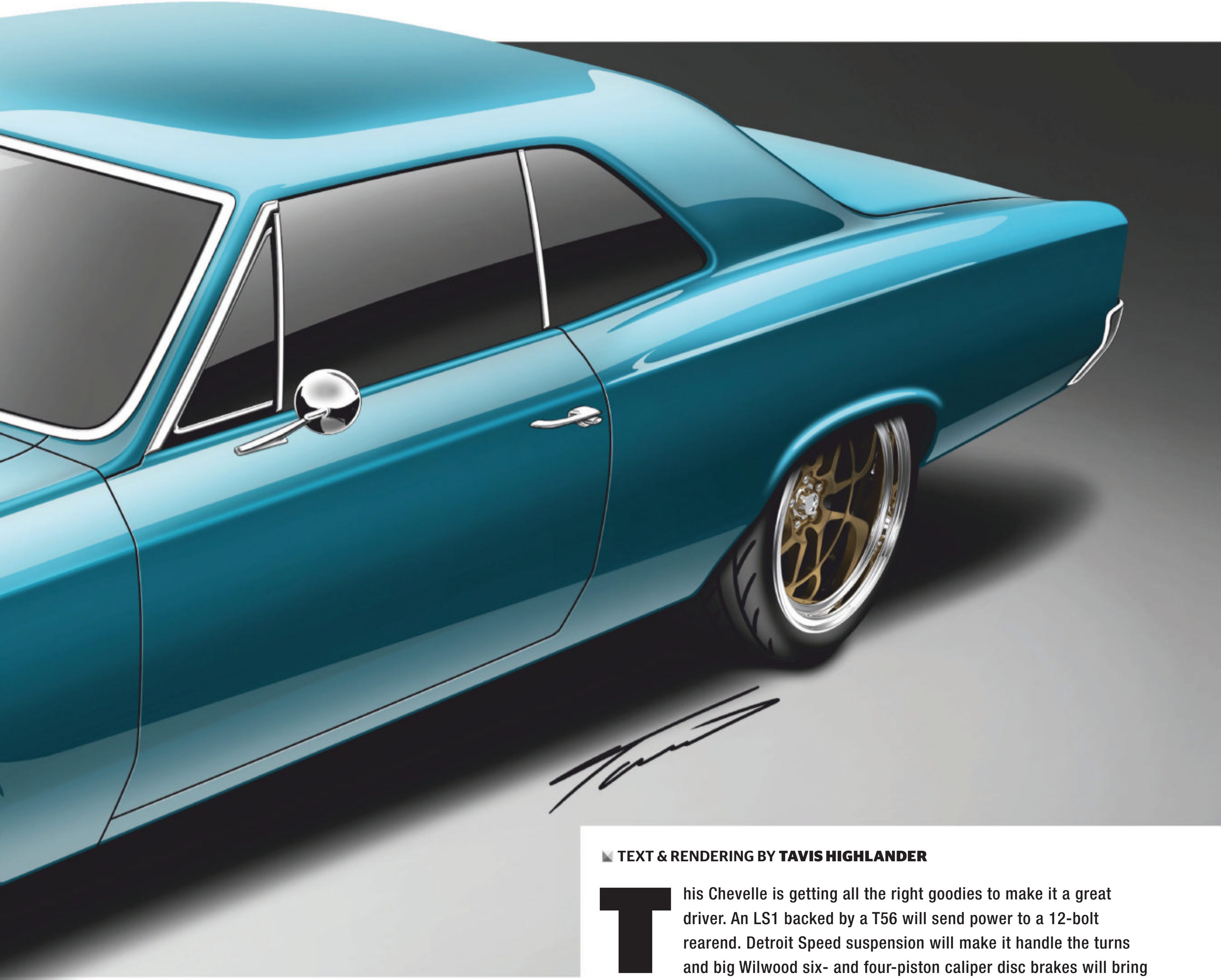


TEXT & RENDERING BY TAVIS HIGHLANDER

This Chevelle is getting all the right goodies to make it a great driver. An LS1 backed by a T56 will send power to a 12-bolt rearend. Detroit Speed suspension will make it handle the turns and big Wilwood six- and four-piston caliper disc brakes will bring it to a stop. The 3030 Series G wheels, in 18x9.5 and 18x12, allow for some wider rubber and capitalize on the aggressive stance.

1966 CHEVELLE

Making this build even more special is the story behind it. The owner originally purchased it in high school and started modifying it right away. When it was time for college, the Chevelle got parked in the barn and stayed there for about 20 years. When COVID-19 hit, the project was pulled out and assessed. Inspired by Kyle Tucker's "Twister" 1969 Camaro, the owner put together a list of modifications that would be necessary to achieve his goal. The final build will be handled by Hawk's Speed Shop in Manchester, Tennessee. ACP

BY **NICK LICATA** ▪ IMAGES BY **JOSH MISHLER**

NOVA-X

TIM BUCK'S 1967 CHEVY NOVA

Tim Buck's venture into muscle cars began in his teenage years. It all started with his first build, a 1956 Chevy, which gradually led to a number of street rods, customs, and various muscle cars. His last car was a 1970 Chevelle Super Sport, which was impressive but wasn't the pinnacle of his ambition. Though it had a few modifications, it was just a typical muscle car by his standards.

The Chevelle had run its course, and besides, Tim had always wanted a 1967 Nova. He caught wind of a nice-looking red one for sale at a dealership in Ohio. The car had a 283 paired with a Powerglide transmission, but the drivetrain didn't concern Tim, as his goal wasn't to preserve it but to transform it into a powerful street machine equipped with an LS engine and upgraded suspension. So, he eventually sold the Chevelle to finance his dream Nova and the modifications that would soon follow.

Tim didn't have to look far for a shop to handle the build. He had previously worked with Kevin and Matt Zwygart, the father-son team behind Zwygart's Hot Rodz in Cowgill, Missouri, as they had performed a few upgrades on his Chevelle. That positive experience gained Tim's trust, and he was also impressed by their craftsmanship and experience with high-end cars. Tim was confident they were the right team to bring his vision for the Nova to life.

ZHR

After some discussion between Tim and Kevin on the build direction, the Zwygart's team got started on the ground-up restoration process, but it didn't take long for progress on the project to hit a speed bump. After the body was sandblasted, hidden rust issues in the fenders and quarter-panels became unhidden, and it was also discovered that the decklid was packed with body filler. These problems added unforeseen costs to the build, but Tim, undeterred, was all in and committed to seeing the project through.

To tackle the structural issues, Kevin Zwygart reached out to Auto Metal Direct for fresh sheetmetal so the real work could begin. The Nova's transformation was officially underway, with every detail meticulously handled to ensure the finished product was not just a high-performance machine but also a work of art.

At the heart of Tim's Nova is a Chevrolet Performance LS3 crate engine sourced from Karl Chevrolet in Ankeny, Iowa, that delivers a robust 525 hp. The 376ci mill features 10.7:1 compression, aluminum L92-style cylinder heads, and a hydraulic roller camshaft. The rotating assembly features a nodular iron crankshaft, powdered metal connecting rods, and hypereutectic aluminum pistons, all contributing to the engine's durability and high-performance capabilities—perfect for Tim's aggressive driving habits.

For induction, Tim opted for a Granatelli Motor Sports intake manifold and a 103mm throttle body, paired with a Spectre air cleaner for optimal airflow. The exhaust system, custom built by Zwygart's, uses $1^{5}/_{8}$-inch Ultimate Headers and a custom stainless steel 3-inch exhaust system topped with Vibrant Performance mufflers. The result is an engine that not only sounds aggressive but delivers enough power for Tim to be competitive on track days and autocross events while still retaining excellent street manners for local cruising and long outings.

To handle the power, Tim's Nova features a 4L75E transmission connected to a custom driveshaft from John's Custom Driveline. Out back is a John's 9-inch with 3.73 gears, an Eaton Truetrac posi unit, and Strange 33-spline axles. It's a bulletproof ensemble that ensures that power gets to the pavement for long-lasting performance.

The suspension system is just as impressive, designed to give the Nova handling capabilities that match the engine's high-performance capabilities. The front suspension features a Heidts Pro-G subframe, Viking double-adjustable coilover shocks, and a 1¾-inch sway bar. Rack-and-pinion steering ensures precise control, while in the rear a Heidts four-link suspension system with Viking coilovers and a ¾-inch sway bar keeps the car planted in the corners. For efficient stopping power, Wilwood brakes with 12-inch rotors and four-piston calipers up front, along with 11-inch rotors and four-piston calipers in the rear, get the job done with ease.

Inside, the Nova is just as much of a showpiece as it is under the hood. The black leather upholstery, crafted by Starline Hot Rod Interiors, exudes a classic muscle car vibe, while custom door panels and a custom console add a modern touch. Braum seats keep Tim and his passengers comfortable, while an Ididit steering column and Billet Specialties steering wheel provide the perfect interface between driver and machine. The custom dashboard, designed by Zwygart's, houses Classic Instruments gauges, ensuring that all critical engine data is easily accessible.

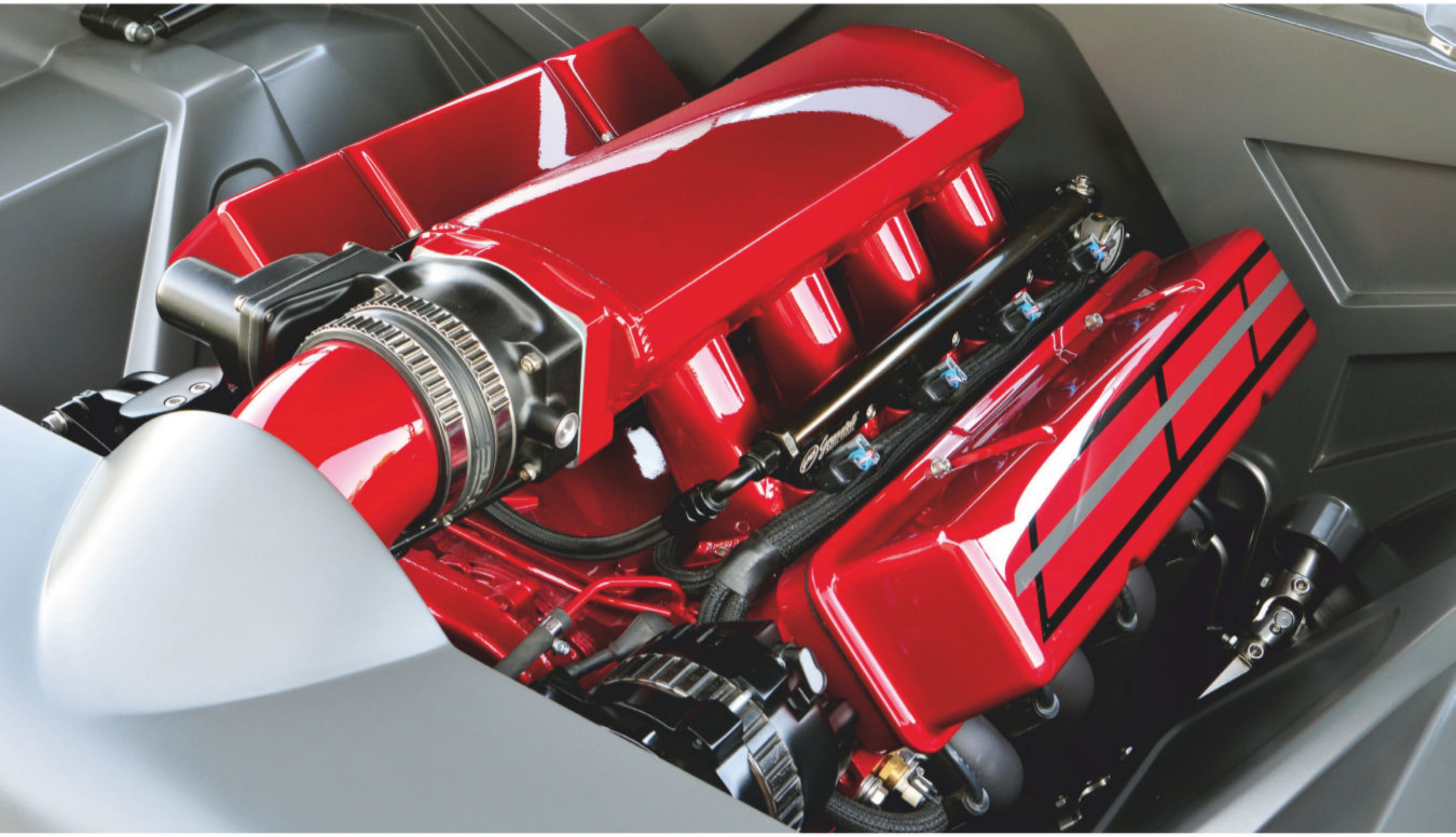
A Kenwood head unit controls a powerful sound system aided by a Kenwood amplifier, which includes four strategically placed Kicker speakers and a 10-inch subwoofer, installed by Matt Zwygart. Whether cruising around town or hitting the open road, Tim's Nova delivers a soundtrack that's just as impressive as the LS3 engine's roar.

The Nova's brilliant exterior features an excellent blend of classic lines and modern touches. The bodywork, done by Zwygart's, features a flawless exhibition of sheetmetal prep topped with a fresh coat of Axalta Lead Foot Gray and Candy Red paint, giving the car a rich, eye-catching appearance. Custom hood striping adds a sporty look, while tucked front and rear bumpers give the car a sleek, streamlined appearance.

Other exterior highlights include custom spoilers, front and rear, Ringbrothers side mirrors, Kindig-it Design door handles, and flush-mount glass, all contributing to the Nova's modern, high-tech aesthetic. The Boze Camber wheels—19x8 in the front and 20x10 in the rear—are wrapped in Nitto Invo rubber, providing the Nova with just the right balance of grip and style.

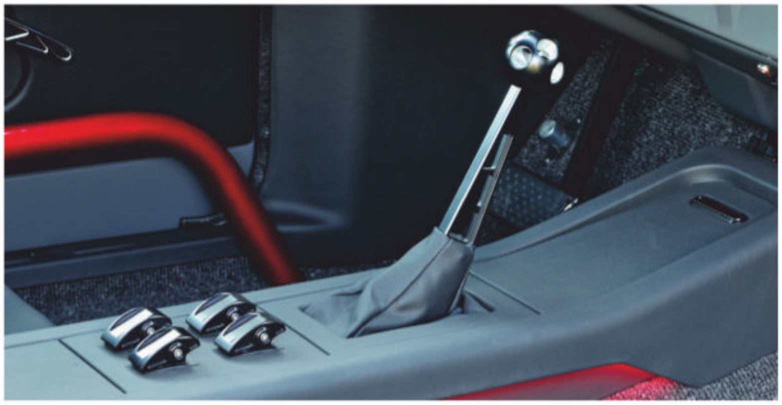
To Tim Buck, his 1967 Nova is much more than a gorgeous muscle car, it was a five-year project that satisfied a lifelong dream. From its LS3 engine to its aftermarket suspension and meticulously crafted interior, every detail of this build reflects the talent of Kevin and Matt Zwygart along with Tim's passion for performance and style with a one-of-a-kind hot rod that is just as beautiful as it is powerful.

We asked Tim if he would do anything different if he had to do it all over again. Tim says, "Yes, find a better candidate to start with, but this is hot rodding and sometimes you have to peel back the layers to see exactly what you have." ACP



NOVA X

BilletSpecialties



TECH ✓

OWNER: Tim Buck, Kansas City, Missouri
VEHICLE: 1967 Nova

Engine
TYPE: LS3
DISPLACEMENT: 376 ci
COMPRESSION RATIO: 10.7:1
BORE: 4.065
STROKE: 3.622
CYLINDER HEADS: Aluminum L92-style port
ROTATING ASSEMBLY: Nodular iron crankshaft, Powdered metal connecting rods, hypereutectic aluminum pistons
CAMSHAFT: Hydraulic roller
INDUCTION: Granatelli Motor Sports intake manifold, Granatelli 103mm throttle body, Spectre air cleaner
FUEL INJECTION: GM
EXHAUST: Ultimate Headers $1^{5}/_{8}$ inch, Zwygart's Hot Rodz custom 3-inch stainless exhaust (Cowgill, MO), Vibrant Performance mufflers
VALVE COVERS: Custom aluminum
ACCESSORY DRIVE: Synister Products
ANCILLARIES: Ringbrothers hood hinges, Powermaster alternator, PRC fan
OUTPUT: 525 hp

Drivetrain
TRANSMISSION: 4L75E
DRIVESHAFT: John's Custom Driveline
REAR AXLE: John's 9-inch, 3.73 gears, Eaton Truetrac posi unit, Strange 33-spline axles

Chassis
FRAME: Custom fabrication by Zwygart's Hot Rodz
FRONT SUSPENSION: Heidts Pro-G subframe, Viking double-adjustable coilover shocks, Heidts 1¾-inch sway bar, rack-and-pinion steering
REAR SUSPENSION: Heidts four-link suspension system, Viking double-adjustable coilover shocks, ¾-inch sway bar
BRAKES: Wilwood 12-inch rotors, four-piston calipers front, Wilwood 11-inch rotors, four-piston calipers rear, GM master cylinder, Kugel proportioning valve

Wheels & Tires
WHEELS: Boze Camber 19x8 front, 20x10 rear
TIRES: Nitto Invo 255/30R19 front, 305/25R20

Interior
UPHOLSTERY: Black leather, black loop carpet by Starline Hot Rod Interiors (Papillion, NE)
DOOR PANELS: Custom by Starline
CONSOLE: Custom by Starline
SEATS: Braum
ROLLCAGE: Six-point by Zwygart's
HARNESS: Braum
STEERING: Ididit steering column, Billet Specialties steering wheel
SHIFTER: Ringbrothers
DASH: Custom by Zwygart's Hot Rodz
INSTRUMENTATION: Classic Instruments
WIRING: American Autowire by Zwygart's Hot Rodz
INSULATION: Design Engineering Boom Mat
HVAC: Vintage Air
VENTS: Custom by Zwygart's Hot Rodz
ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM: Kenwood head unit, Kenwood amp, Kicker 3-inch and 6x9-inch, Kicker 10-inch subwoofer installed my Matt Zwygart

Exterior
BODYWORK: Zwygart's Hot Rodz
PAINT: Axalta Lead Foot Gray and Candy Red with black hood striping
PAINTER: Kevin Zwygart
HOOD: Auto Metal Direct
GRILLE: Alumicraft
SPOILER: Custom front and rear
FRONT BUMPER: Stock, tucked
REAR BUMPER: Stock, tucked
HEADLIGHTS: HID Projectors
TAILLIGHTS: Felser
SIDE MIRRORS: Ringbrothers
DOOR HANDLES: Kindig-it Design
GLASS: Flush mount

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SELECTING SUPER STOPPERS

THE WHYS AND WHEREFORES OF WILWOOD BRAKES

BY **RON CERIDONO**
IMAGES BY **RYAN FOSS**
VIDEOGRAPHY BY **RYAN FOSS PRODUCTIONS**

With all the options available today there are some critical questions to ask when selecting an aftermarket brake system. When the team at Eddie Motorsports needed help deciding what components to use on their LS-powered 1972 Chevy Nova they turned to Wilwood Disc Brakes' Mike Hamrick for advice.

The first question Hamrick always asks is, "What are you going to do with the car?" In this case the Chevy would primarily be used on the street for "spirited driving" and occasionally compete in an autocross, but not see open track use. Of course there was an aesthetic consideration, as they were after the retro muscle car/Pro Touring look. To accomplish the goals set forth, Hamrick recommended their six-piston Narrow Forged Superlite 6R caliper kit up front with 12.88-inch SRP, drilled-and-slotted rotors. Because less rear braking is needed in a street car application, he suggested a four-piston rear caliper. In this case Narrow Forged Superlite 4R calipers were used as they are made from the same forgings as six-piston calipers, so they perfectly match those up front. Rotors were also 12.88-inch in the rear.

SOURCES

EDDIE MOTORSPORTS
(909) 581-7398
eddiemotorsports.com

HEIDTS HOT ROD & MUSCLE CAR PARTS
(800) 841-8188
heidts.com

WILWOOD DISC BRAKES
(805) 388-1188
wilwood.com

1.

1. Wilwood's Mike Hamrick torques the fasteners securing the six-piston caliper to the Heidts front suspension that will be under the Eddie Motorsports 1972 Chevy Nova.

WILWOOD PARTS LIST FOR THE EDDIE MOTORSPORTS NOVA:

FRONT DISC BRAKE KIT:	**140-9803-DR**
FRONT BRAKE LINE KIT:	**220-7056**
REAR DISC BRAKE KIT:	**140-9219-DR**
REAR BRAKE LINE KIT:	**220-17289**
PARKING BRAKE CABLE KIT:	**330-9371**

To verify the effectiveness of the brake components suggested, Hamrick made the following calculations:

	FRONT		REAR	
PARAMETER	**VALUE**	**UNITS**	**VALUE**	**UNITS**
Piston Ø #1	1.620	in.	1.120	in.
Piston #1 area	2.061	in.^{2}	0.985	in.^{2}
Piston Ø #2	1.120	in.	1.120	in.
Piston #2 area	0.985	in.^{2}	0.985	in.^{2}
Piston Ø #3	1.120	in.	0.000	in.
Piston #3 area	0.985	in.^{2}	0.000	in.^{2}
Total piston area	4.03	in.^{2}	1.97	in.^{2}
Effective radius	5.44	in.	5.44	in.
Pad width		in.		in.
Rotor dia.	12.88	in.	12.88	in.
Line pressure	600	psi	600	psi
Pad μ	0.50		0.50	
lbs. force	2419	lbs.	1182	lbs.
Braking torque	6580	in.-lbs.	3216	in.-lbs.
FRONT-TO-REAR BRAKE BIAS	**67%**	**F**	**33%**	**R**

While the proof is in the system's performance, this combination of front and rear components will provide all the braking power needed with the look the Eddie Motorsports team wanted.

When it comes to all things Wilwood, Mike Hamrick is our go-to guy, so we decided to ask some basic questions that may help you when selecting brake components.

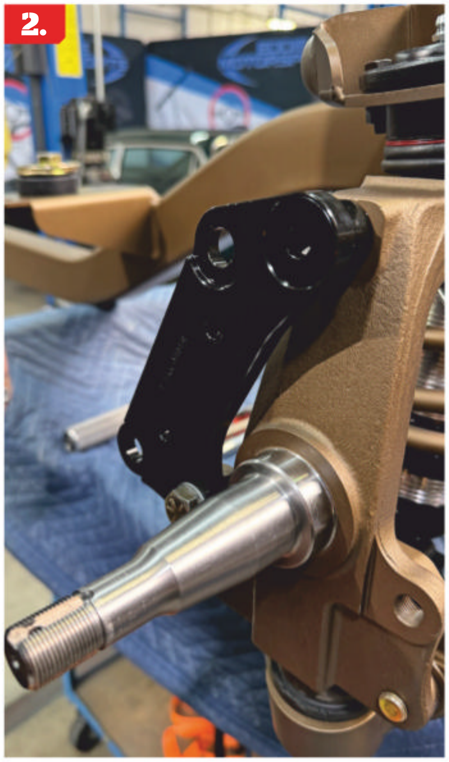
ACP: *Is there a point where rotor diameter dictates the caliper required, such as four- or six-piston?*

MIKE HAMRICK: Wilwood's smaller 11.00- and 12.19-inch front brake kits come with four-piston Dynalite calipers. Because the pads are smaller, and we need more clamping force because of the smaller wheels typically being used, we use these smaller four-piston calipers. When we start getting into 17-inch or larger wheels (18 inch in the case on Eddie Motorsports Nova) we start looking at 12.88-inch and larger rotor diameters. These front larger-diameter brake kits come with six-piston calipers that hold a larger brake pad. As we are more concerned about pad tapper in these applications, we use a six-piston staggered piston design to help combat that possible issue.

ACP: *The Nova doesn't have a booster. Would a different master cylinder size be required if a booster was used?*

MH: Yes, leverage from a power brake versus a manual brake comes into play when deciding what bore size master is best suited.

2.



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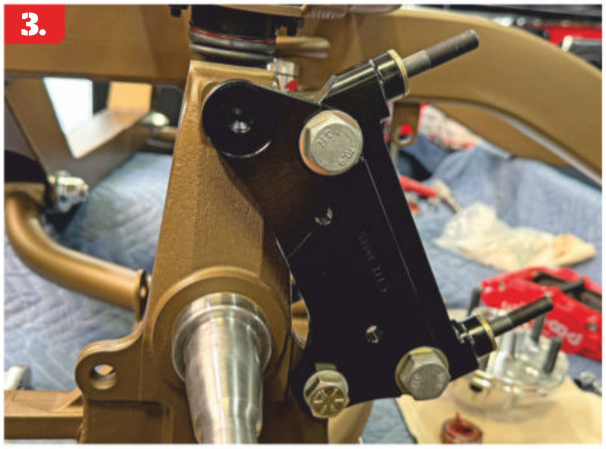
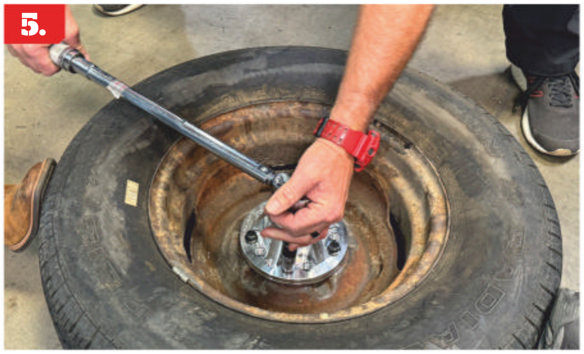


2. This bracket bolts to the spindle, it can be shimmed to precisely center the caliper over the rotor. Thread locker is used on all the bracket-attaching hardware.

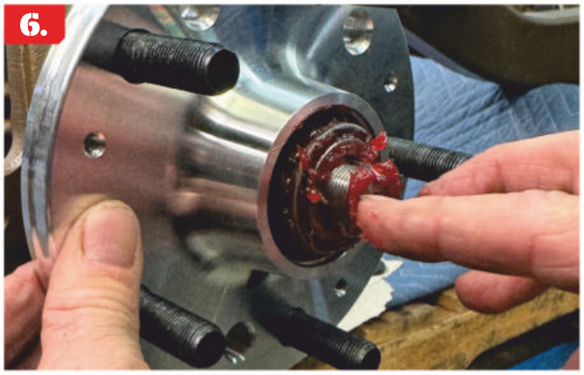
3. The radial caliper mounting bracket attaches to the spindle bracket with two bolts. Shims can be used on the mounting studs to locate the caliper on the rotor radially.

4. Wilwood's aluminum hubs have two sets of threaded holes (5-on-4.5 and 5-on-4.75 bolt patterns) that accept 12-point lug bolts. They're installed with thread locker.

4.

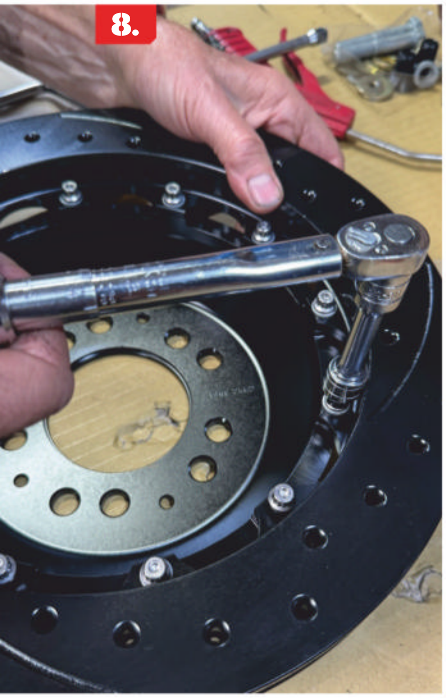


5. A neat trick to hold the hubs while tightening the lug bolts is to drop the assembly into a wheel with the correct bolt pattern.

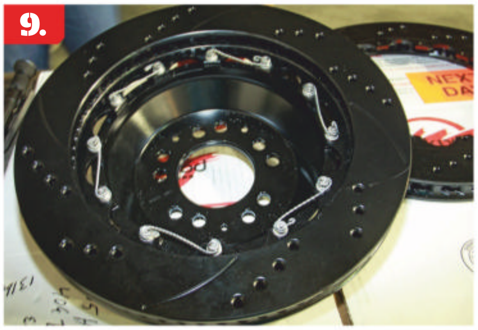


6. Wilwood's hubs come with bearings, races, seals, washers, nuts, and cotter pins. The bearings were packed with high-temperature disc brake grease.

7. Those hubs and cool screw-on Wilwood grease caps have to be used with the supplied hardware—the stock washers are too big to fit.



8. Wilwood's rotors attach to the hats with 12-point screws. Thread locker is applied then the fasteners are torqued to 140 in-lb in a crisscross pattern.



9. After installation, the screws are secured with 0.032-inch-diameter stainless steel safety wire. Note one screw can't come loose without pulling against the adjacent screw.

10. The rotors slide over the hubs. These rotors are directional, so they are marked left and right *(the left side is shown)*.

The first thing we have to address is how much vacuum the engine will make. The engine in this car will be marginal on vacuum because of the camshaft being used. Wilwood suggests that an engine at idle that makes right around 18 inches of vacuum is adequate for power brakes to work properly. Another way to get power brakes without a booster using vacuum is hydroboost, but that also means that the brakes will be working from the same pump as the steering system, and there are pros and cons with that, too.

We came to a final decision to use manual brakes. Using the stock pedal that has adequate leverage (6:1 from the factory), it narrows our results to either a 15/16- or 7/8-inch bore tandem master cylinder. It was also because of aesthetics. They wanted a clean firewall with just the master cylinder and proportioning valve unit and not all the other additions of a booster or the ugly hydroboost. For this manual system, here is the next thing we look at. Even with a 7/8-inch bore master we will have enough volume for the disc/disc brake system we are using on the Nova. Look at these numbers, then we'll confirm why we chose 7/8-inch bore master cylinder:

Calculations with 100 pounds of force on the 6:1 leverage pedal:
7/8-inch bore master = 1,000 psi
15/16-inch bore master = 869 psi

ACP: *What do you recommend for brake pedal ratios for manual versus power brakes?*

MH: Wilwood's rule of thumb: Manual brakes with $^{7}/_{8}$-, $^{15}/_{16}$- and sometimes 1.00-inch bore masters and a pedal with 6:1 or more leverage is recommended. Power brakes with 1.00- and 1.12-inch bore master cylinders can use pedal ratios around 3:1 (if there is plenty of manifold vacuum or a hydroboost system).

ACP: *Is it correct to say that braided brake lines should only be used at flex points front and rear? (Some builders like plumbing brake systems with all braided lines for looks.)*

MH: For any disc brakes system, we recommend as much $^{3}/_{16}$-inch hard line as possible, and the least amount of -3 flex line as possible. Because flex line expands under psi, that induces compliance within the system and will cause a "soft" or "mushy" pedal feel. The hard line will not expand and help keep the psi generated by the master cylinder all the way to the disc brakes being used.

ACP: *In most cases $^{3}/_{16}$-inch brake lines are used. Is there ever a reason to use ¼-inch brake lines?*

MH: For disc brakes, $^{3}/_{16}$-inch hard line is recommended. For drum brakes ¼-inch lines can be used. However, by today's standards and for ease of plumbing a vehicle, we'll suggest that a customer using disc/drums on their car can use $^{3}/_{16}$- line front and rear.

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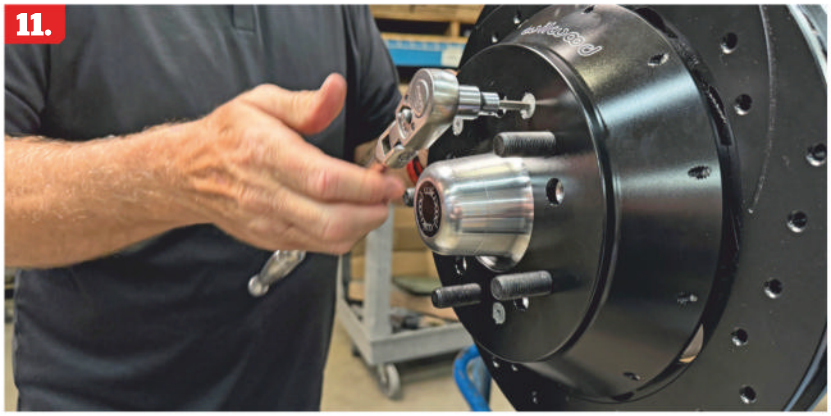
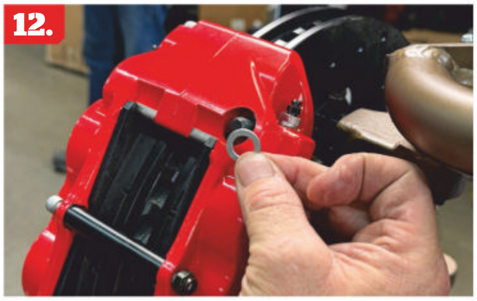
11.



11. Although the hat/rotor assemblies are sandwiched between the wheel and the hub, Wilwood includes countersunk screws to keep things in place when the wheels are removed.

12. Included in the caliper hardware kit are precision washers to go under the caliper for shimming if needed. The same washers are also installed under the nuts.

12.

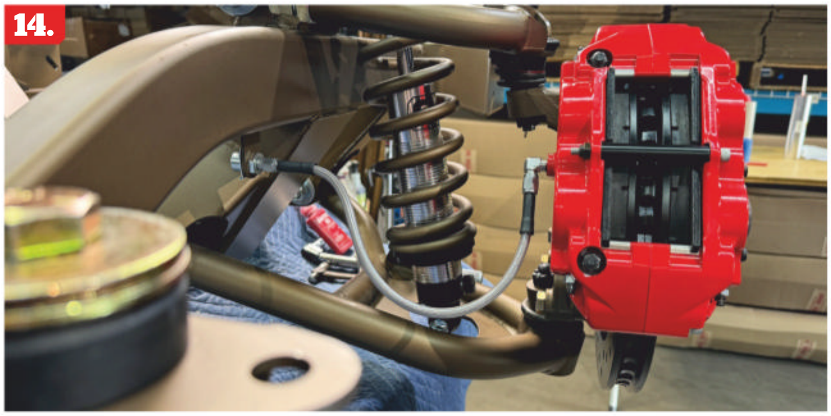


13.

13. Once properly located, the calipers are retained with the supplied shoulder nuts. Six-piston calipers have a left and a right—they're mounted correctly when the bleeder is at the top.

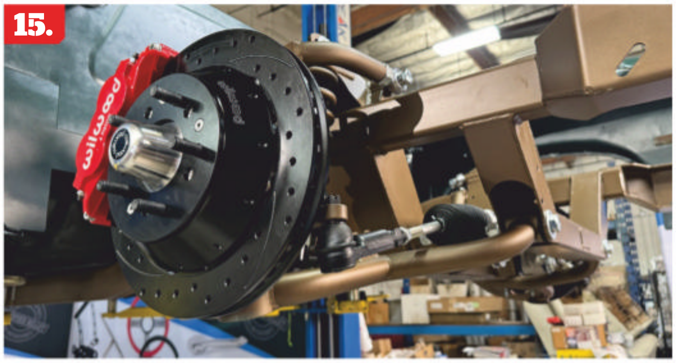
14. The AN-3 ($^{3}/_{16}$ inch) stainless steel brake lines and fittings are from Wilwood (PN 220-7056).

14.



15. Wilwood calipers are available plain, polished, or in 25 colors, including competition red as shown here. Logos can be black, silver, white, blue, red, or laser engraved (on select colors).

15.



ACP: *Do you always recommend installing a proportioning valve?*

MH: On a tandem master cylinder, yes. When many variables of the car's chassis have been changed, as in this case. Coilover front end and rack-and-pinion steering, rear from a leaf spring to a coilover four-link, tire/wheel size, engine weight, brake bias, and so on. Too many things have been changed from what the Nova came off the assembly line with. With the use of a proportioning valve you can help dial in the needed bias under hard braking, but if you install the valve, drive the car, and it stops as well as expected and no wheels lock up, you have only spent $50 and saved a lot of time not having to plumb one into the system after the car is built.

ACP: *How do you suggest adjusting a proportioning valve?*

MH: Start with the valve screwed all the way in with no threads showing. This will give us the maximum amount of rear brake possible (assuming the valve is on the rear brakes).

Go for a drive. Do a panic stop on a clear/clean road about 45 mph. Did the rear brake lock up? If yes, turn the prop valve knob out. This will take some of the rear brake out of the system.

Do the same stop as above. If the brakes lock up, say, on the last 10 feet of the stop, turn the knob out another one to three turns and try again.

Try it again, and if the car stops great and the rear brakes are not locking up, you should be set for any type of street driving.

ACP: *Will these brakes require any specific bedding procedure?*

MH: Yes, we recommend doing a very simple bedding procedure to ensure that the brakes will perform well.

On this Nova with these brakes using our off-the-shelf BP-10 brake pads, do five to six hard stops from 45 to 20 mph with the windows down. As you get to the later stops you will notice the smell of brakes. That is good! That means we are saturating the brake system to get the calipers, pads, and rotors all the same temperature.

At that point, do two more stops from 45 to 0 mph. Get out and inspect the brakes. No leaks? No rubbing? No noises? Then we are good to get the car back up to a normal driving speed trying not to use as much brake as possible. This driving will help get air into the brake system and cool it down gently. Take it for a 15-minute drive and park it. After it's cooled down to ambient temperature, the system will be ready for you to drive and operate with the least amount of noise and dust possible. The brake pad material is now mated to the rotor, making for a well-performing system.

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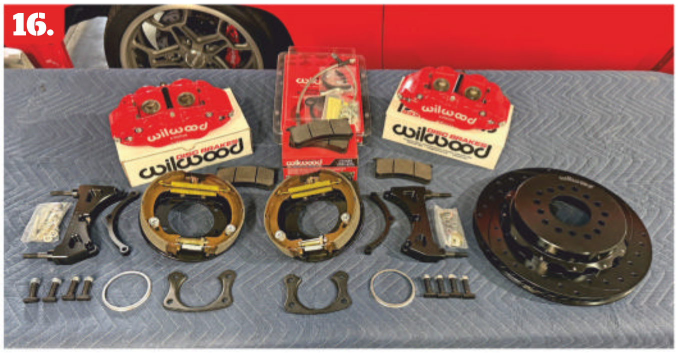
16.



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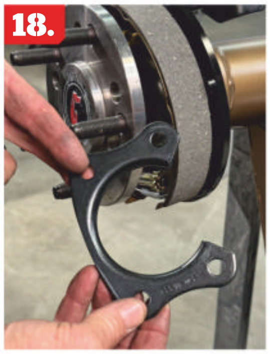

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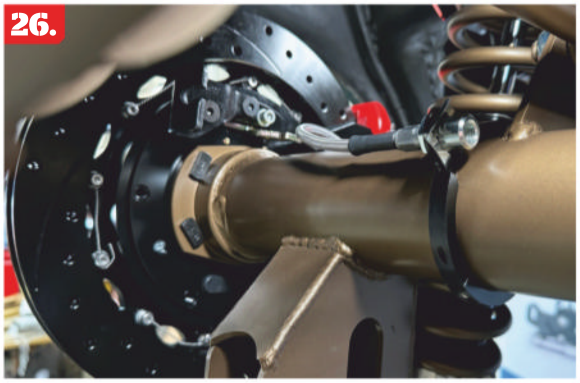

16. Wilwood's rear disc brake kit includes four-piston calipers with a hidden internal expanding parking brake.

17. The parking brake assembly is mounted to a backing plate that bolts to the 9-inch axle housing. That bracket at the top of the backing plate is for the parking brake cable.

18. This is the retainer that holds the axle/wheel bearing assembly and the backing plate in place. Unlike the OEM design, the open end allows it to be installed with the bearing pressed onto the axle.

19. A large hole in the Currie axle flange allows access for tightening the axle retainer bolts.

20. The radial mount for the rear Wilwood caliper bolts to the parking brake backing plate. As in the front, shims may be used to center the caliper on the rotor.

21. Also, like the front calipers, shims may be used to properly locate the caliper in relationship to the diameter of the rotor.

22. In the rear, Wilwood four-piston calipers are used. Note these calipers have two bleeders as they may be installed on either side of the car.

23. With the brakes in place, Hamrick rolls the completed Currie axle assembly under the Nova. As in the front, the rotors are attached to the hats with 12-point screws that are safety wired.

24. As in the front, the rear calipers use high-performance BP-10 compound pads to provide optimized braking for high-performance street use.

25. The Eddie Motorsports Nova is equipped with a $^{15}/_{16}$-inch manual master cylinder and adjustable proportioning valve.

26. Recently introduced are Wilwood's cool billet axle clamp brackets for rear brake lines for 3-inch axle tubes (PN 220-17289).

ADJUSTING WHEEL BEARINGS

There are a variety of techniques used to adjust wheel bearings, but here is a commonly accepted procedure:

While spinning the hub, tighten the nut firmly, back the nut off ¼ to ½ turn and finger-tighten the nut (which is roughly the equivalent of 5 in-lb). If the cotter pin hole doesn't line up, loosen the nut no more than half a flat. A properly adjusted bearing will have from 0.001 to 0.005 inch of play.

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BY **FUELISH MEDIA** ▨ IMAGES BY **THE AUTHOR**

JEFF JOHNSON'S SECOND-CHANCE 1969 CAAMARO

A first car is more than just transportation; it's a symbol of freedom, independence, and the beginning of a new chapter. While today's standards might make them seem less impressive, those early rides held a unique charm that's hard to replicate. Looking back, would you still cherish your first car, or has time dimmed its allure? Some people hold onto their original cars, while others move on but intimately spend years searching for a replica to relive those nostalgic days. As anyone who's tried knows, recreating the past is rarely as simple as it seems.

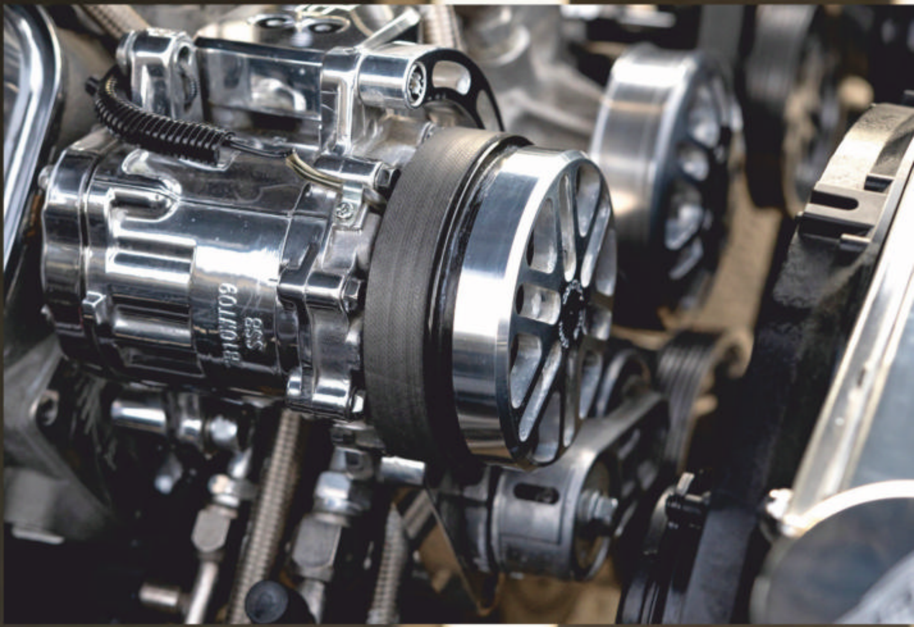
Jeff Johnson, of Yorba Linda, California, knows this all too well. After graduating high school with an engineering scholarship, Jeff's parents surprised him with a 1969 Camaro—a car that would become an integral part of his life. He and his friends made countless memories, and he even had a first date with his future wife, Joyce, at the 1972 Winternationals in Pomona. However, when Jeff and Joyce got married, they had to make a difficult decision: sell the Camaro to purchase essential household items. While it was a tough choice, they knew it was the right one for their future. Joyce's father stepped in to help, allowing Jeff to drive his old 1962 Chevy wagon, affectionately nicknamed "the bus."

After 50 years of marriage, Joyce decided to it was time for Jeff to search for another 1969 Camaro to relive their youth. To Jeff's surprise, he found a suitable car just a short distance away, much closer than he had anticipated. With renewed enthusiasm, Jeff began planning to build a bigger, better, faster Camaro than his original. He was immediately drawn to the crate engines offered by Smeding Performance, which provided the horsepower and reliability he desired for daily driving. The Smeding 572ci engine was a perfect fit as it can easily crank out 737 hp and 740 lb-ft of torque while running on regular 91-octane fuel.

To handle the increased power, Jeff carefully selected a suspension system from Total Cost Involved. Their front and rear kits were known for their performance and distinct tubular subframe design. A full set of Ridetech coilovers ensures a comfortable ride, while the rear four-link provides excellent handling. To match the power output, Jeff chose a TREMEC T-56 manual transmission, which was a perfect fit for his Camaro.

wilwood

572
Camaro
YENKO



YENKO
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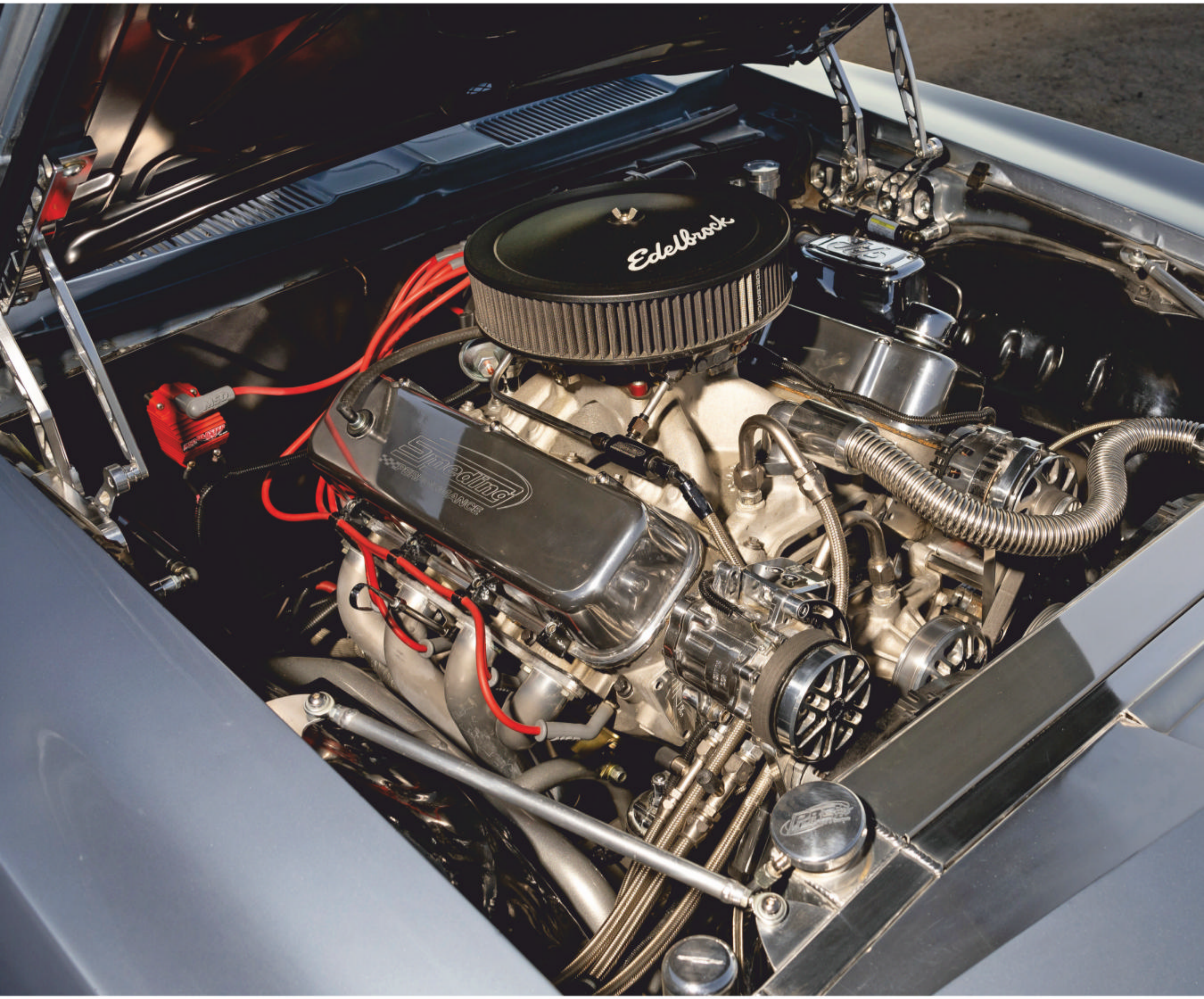
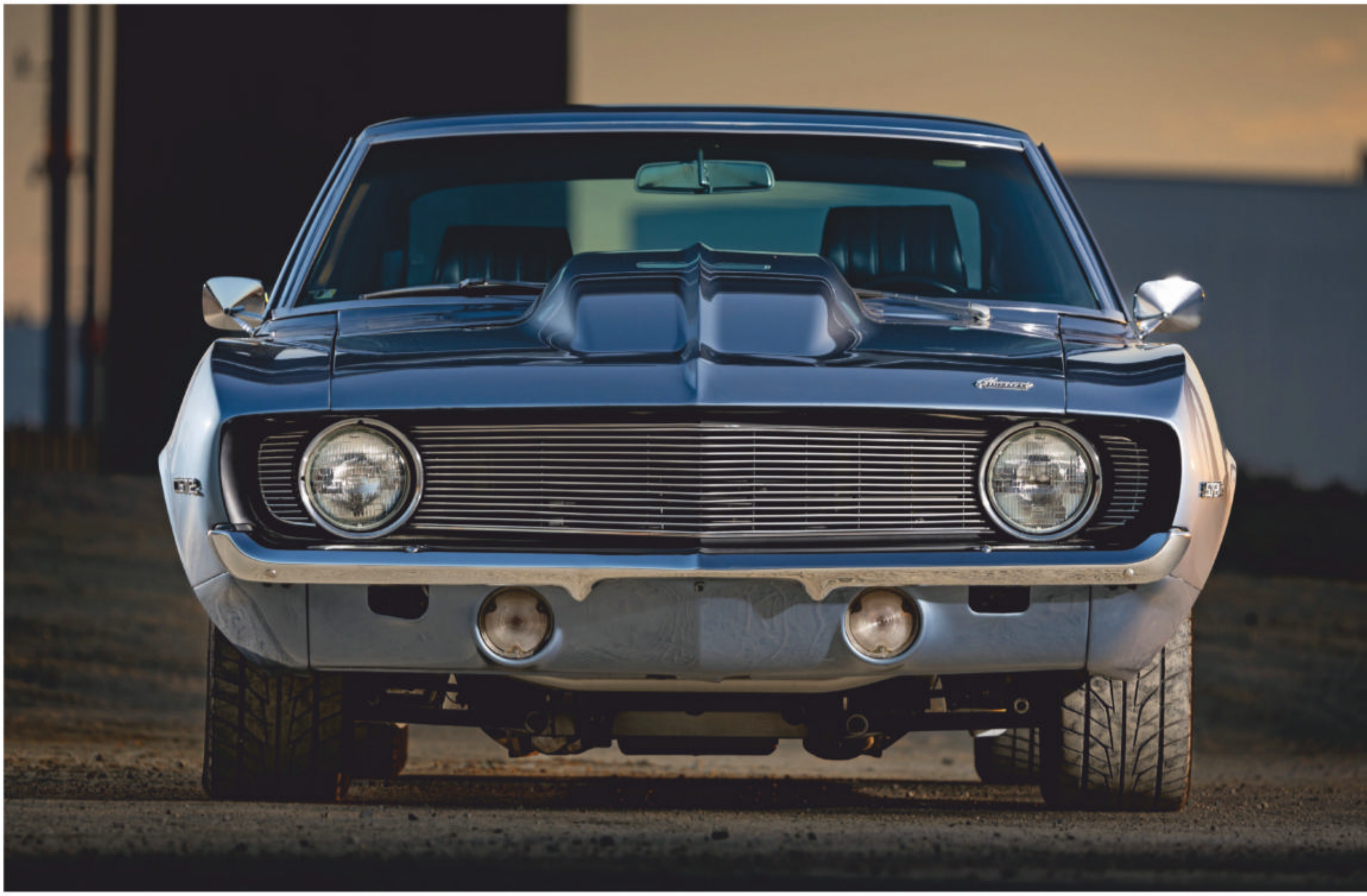


When customizing the car's appearance, Jeff opted for a sleek, minimalist approach with carefully selected premium components and genuine OEM-style replacements. He conducted extensive research, both online and in person, sourcing parts from local suppliers like Classic Performance Products and Classic Industries, as well as frequent visits to the Pomona Swap Meet. Every part he purchased was brand new; he found the quality and pricing at Pomona to be unbeatable. To give the Camaro a classic, eye-catching look, Jeff chose the iconic Le Mans Blue paint color. He also added an AMD 4-inch steel cowl hood and Billet Specialties Street Lite wheels, creating a stunning combination of timeless style and performance.

Jeff's first Camaro had a slightly modified 427ci engine, a four-speed transmission, and a suspension setup that included 90/10 shocks and rear lift bars. When he would engage the clutch, the entire car would lift 5-6 inches, which always drew attention. While it was fast, it wasn't particularly well-suited for winding roads, and the drum brakes left something to be desired. In contrast, this new Camaro with its full TCI suspension system is in a completely different league in terms of handling—it even outperforms the Corvettes he's owned. The six-speed transmission and 4:36 gears provide significantly better acceleration, and the Wilwood brakes offer exceptional stopping power. The dual-disc clutch has been flawless, whereas his old Camaro required a new 11-inch clutch every six months.

Smeding
PERFORMANCE
CPP

572



Now that his second 1969 Camaro is completed and as thrilling to drive as the one he had in his youth, Jeff is eager to put as many miles on it as possible. Jeff's new Camaro is the ultimate revitalization of his younger self's dreams. He still finds it hard to believe that he actually owns a car like this. Despite achieving his dream of owning a muscle car, Jeff attributes his passion for automobiles to his early experiences, particularly his first Camaro, which took him on countless adventures.

TECH ✓

OWNER: Jeff Johnson, Yorba Linda, California
VEHICLE: 1969 Chevy Camaro

Engine

BUILT & TUNED BY: Smeding Performance
TYPE: 2012 Chevy/Dart "M" Block 4.63 bore 572
CRANKSHAFT: 4.250-inch stroke, 4340 forged steel, micro-polished and chamfered, #1 and #4 rod pins hollowed for lightness, Nitride surface treatment, internally balanced
CAMSHAFT: Smeding hydraulic roller
RODS: Forged H-beam
PISTONS: Flat-top, high-silicone forged aluminum
RINGS: Moly faced, ductile iron upper, reversed taper, beveled second, light tension three-piece oil
CYLINDER HEADS: AFR aluminum
INDUCTION: Edelbrock Victor Jr. single-plane intake manifold
ACCESSORY DRIVE SYSTEM: Concept One serpentine belt system,
OIL PAN: 6-quart Milodon
FUEL SYSTEM: Holley Quick Fuel 950 carburetor
COOLING: Concept One water pump, Performance Rod & Custom core support, radiator, condenser, overflow tank assembly, dual electric fans
EXHAUST: TCI headers, custom stainless steel 3-inch exhaust system by Muffler Man, Black Widow mufflers
ENGINE DRESS UP: Stainless steel braided lines for water, A/C, fuel, and power steering; billet hydraulic clutch reservoir; undercover firewall cover; Ringbrothers billet hood hinges

Drivetrain

TRANSMISSION: American Powertrain assembled TREMEC T-56 Magnum six-speed transmission with shifter and 3-inch aluminum driveshaft, Centerforce twin-disc clutch and flywheel
REAR AXLE: Currie F9 9-inch, limited-slip differential, 31-spline axles

Chassis

FRAME: Total Cost Involved (TCI) tubular front subframe and subframe connectors
FRONT SUSPENSION: TCI power rack-and-pinion, tubular A-arms, and spindles
REAR SUSPENSION: TCI antiroll bar and four-link with panhard bar
SPRINGS/SHOCKS: Ridetech single-adjustable coilover shocks
BRAKES: Wilwood 12-inch rotors with four-piston calipers, Classic Performance Products Hydrastop with built-in prop valve, JEGS Stage Control line lock

Wheels & Tires

WHEELS: 17x8 and 17x11 Billet Specialties Street Lite wheels
TIRES: Nitto NT555, 245/45R17 and 315/35R17

Interior

SEATS: Procar by Scat Rally Naugahyde seats (front), Procar by Scat rear seat cover, Classic Industries three-point harness belts
GAUGES: Auto Meter carbon fiber
STEERING: Ididit chrome tilt column, Billet Specialties steering wheel, CPP stainless steering shaft and U-joints
PEDAL ASSEMBLY: Classic Industries
CARPET: Classic Industries
AIR CONDITIONING: Vintage Air climate control
MISC.: Original vents, Classic Industries door panels
WIRING: American Autowire

Exterior

HOOD: AMD 4-inch steel cowl hood
GRILLE: Zook billet insert
FABRICATION: Detroit Speed and Engineering mini-tubs
PAINT: Chevy Le Mans Blue

So much of life is about being at the right place at the right time. The same is also true about ignition timing for internal combustion engines. For an engine to make great power it must have all the right parts, including camshaft, cylinder heads, compression, induction, and exhaust. But if the ignition timing is too late or too early, the engine will run poorly and there's the potential for catastrophic damage.

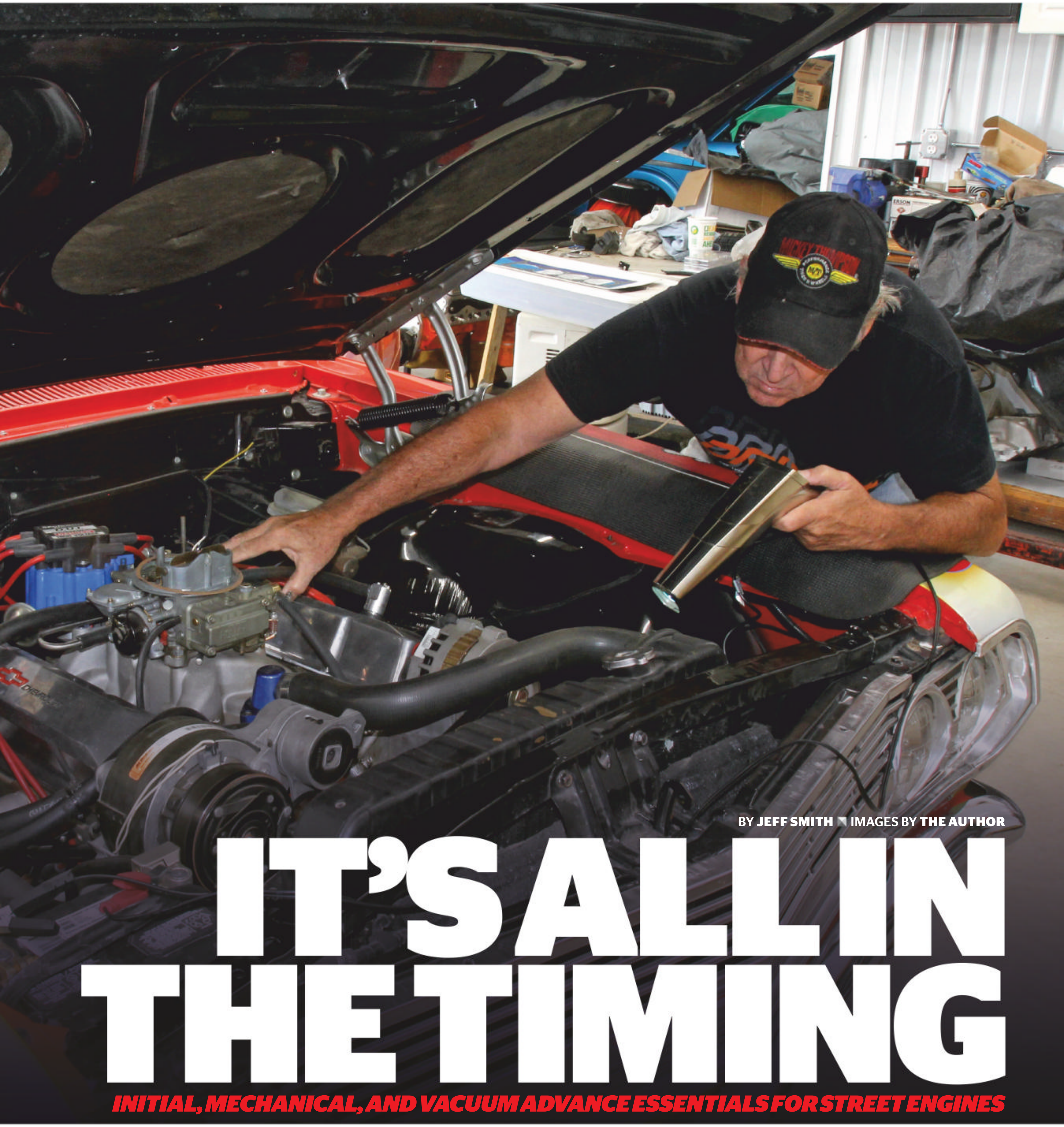
There is also the time-honored tuner's advice that we've seen played out a hundred times that proclaims, "Ninety percent of carburetion problems are ignition related." That may be overstating the case slightly, but it's true enough to take to heart.

This story will outline the three components of ignition timing for engines with distributors and how they all interrelate to bring out all the potential power and efficiency your engine has to offer. We will focus on street engines with carburetors and distributors with an abbreviated nod toward fuel-injected engines with computer control of the ignition. The approaches to obtaining the right ignition curve are the same for all engines—EFI just gets there using a much more precise digital approach.

For engines with a distributor, there are three components to the overall ignition curve. The first is initial timing followed by mechanical advance, which is further enhanced at part throttle with vacuum advance. Let's define each of these and then dive into how all three interact to optimize performance.

Initial timing is the number of degrees of ignition timing before top dead center (BTDC) that is set by rotating the distributor body and verified with a timing light. While OE carbureted engines from the 1960s and 1970s tended to apply conservative single-digit initial timing numbers like 6 degrees BTDC (and sometimes less), most modern performance street engines run best with initial numbers of 10 to15 degrees. We'll get into more details in a moment.

The second component of ignition timing is mechanical advance. This is the amount of advance produced by the distributor using a set of weights and springs that rely on distributor rpm to add advance. This system uses centrifugal weights and springs to create an ignition curve. A typical performance mechanical advance curve will begin around 1,500 rpm and be completed between 2,500 and 3,000 rpm. The rate of mechanical advance can be altered by changing the strength of the springs. As engine speed increases from idle, centrifugal force forces the weight outward at a rate determined by the stiffness of the springs. Heavy springs delay the rate of advance while lighter springs allow the weights to swing outward at a lower rpm, adding mechanical advance relative to engine speed. This rate of increasing ignition advance is linear. As an example, a mechanical advance curve might begin by adding 2 degrees of timing at 1,500 and completing the advance at 3,000 rpm, adding a total of 20 degrees.



BY **JEFF SMITH** IMAGES BY **THE AUTHOR**

IT'S ALL IN THE TIMING

INITIAL, MECHANICAL, AND VACUUM ADVANCE ESSENTIALS FOR STREET ENGINES

Now let's tie the mechanical advance numbers with the initial timing that we previously set at 15 degrees. This means at idle we have 15 degrees and as engine speed increases from idle through 3,000 rpm, the engine sees 15 degrees initial plus 20 degrees mechanical advance for a total of 35 degrees at 3,000 rpm, maintaining that total (in theory) up through the engine's redline limit.

Most street engines running on pump gasoline will use some variation of this initial and mechanical advance curve. There are literally hundreds of variations of this particular combination. You could have 12 degrees initial with 23 degrees mechanical to produce 35 degrees or the engine might want 18 degrees initial with 17 degrees mechanical. While 35 degrees is our total in these examples, your engine might demand more or less total timing to make maximum horsepower.

Thus far we've dealt with the dual combination of initial with mechanical advance. Now let's add in the vacuum advance. Here is where there is significant controversy from some enthusiasts who don't believe there is a need for vacuum advance. They contend that vacuum advance is a holdover from the emissions era and isn't really necessary for a strong running street engine.

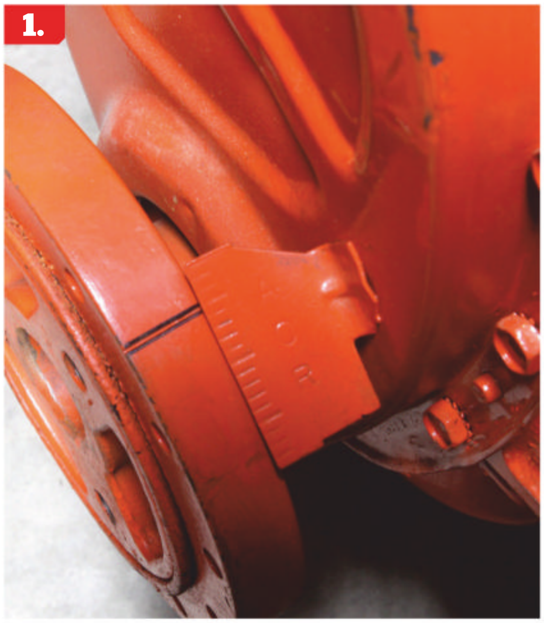
This approach is flawed but does retain a tiny segment of truth that wraps itself around examples based on engines built solely for racing. Drag racing, for example, operates the engine at wide-open throttle (WOT) and that is the racer's only concern. In this application, it is true that vacuum advance plays no part.

For street engines, the reality is these engines literally spend 98 percent of their time running at part throttle. Think about that statement. How often does your engine see WOT on your way to work or the grocery store? Because street engines spend most of their time at part throttle, these engines need additional ignition timing to improve performance under these conditions. We prefer to look at vacuum advance as load-based, part-throttle timing. Before we dive into this it's important to understand why this additional timing is so essential.

Before we get into how to properly employ vacuum advance, it is useful to understand the necessity for this dynamic addition to part-throttle cylinder pressure. Many enthusiasts don't realize that when cruising down the freeway in your small-block Camaro (as an example) that the primary throttle blades are rarely open much past 15 to 20 percent. This is in the area where often the carburetor's main metering circuit is not contributing fuel. Instead, the engine is literally running on the idle circuit. Since the engine is so throttle limited, there is very little air and fuel entering the cylinders. This means that the mixture in the cylinder is much less dense than it would be at WOT.

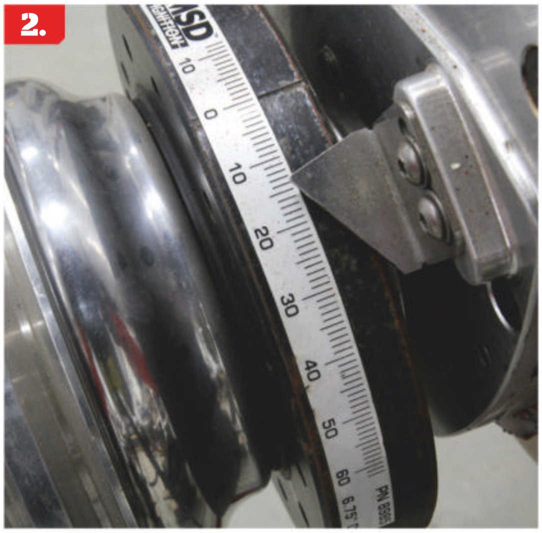
Basic physics contends that a highly dense mixture will combust much more quickly compared to a less dense version. Think of it like the difference between lighting a tiny pile of gunpowder compared to what happens when you light off a densely packed firecracker. The packed firecracker explodes while the loose pile of powder fizzles at a much slower rate. The same is true with air and fuel in the cylinder.

1.



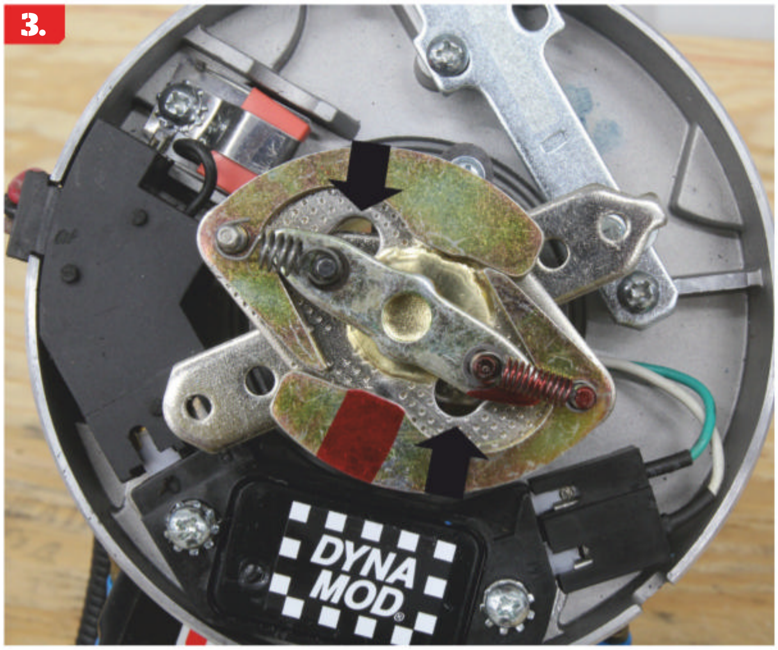
1. It's easy to get confused when trying to read an early stock Chevy timing tag. The letters are a little difficult to read but the numbers representing Before Top Dead Center (BTDC) appear above the 0 line. There's a small "A" on the tag for "advance." Note the timing mark on the harmonic balance is lined up with 10 degrees BTDC in this photo. There are numbers on the tag below the 0 line that represent After Top Dead Center (ATDC) that are marked with an "R" (for retard)—just ignore these because we never set initial timing at ATDC.

2.

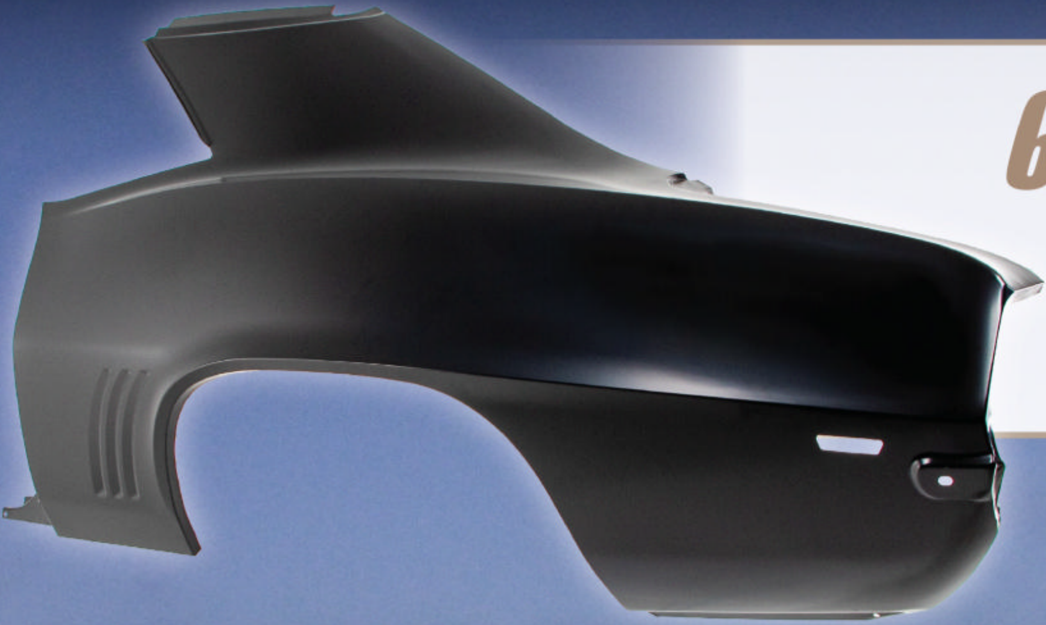


2. MSD makes a nice adhesive timing tape that duplicates a degree balancer if you don't have a dial-back timing light. Here, the initial timing is set at 14 degrees BTDC.

3.



3. This is a mechanical advance system on a DUI HEI distributor. As you can see, the spring tensions can be mixed between the two posts to produce a custom curve. The amount of advance is limited by a pin that travels inside a slot in the advance plate base. Arrows point to the slots.



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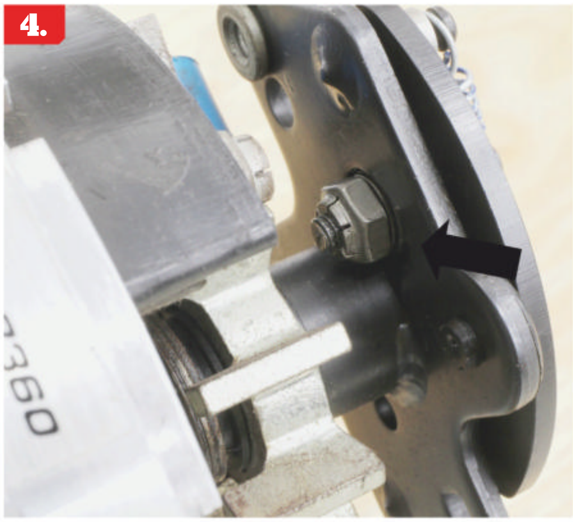
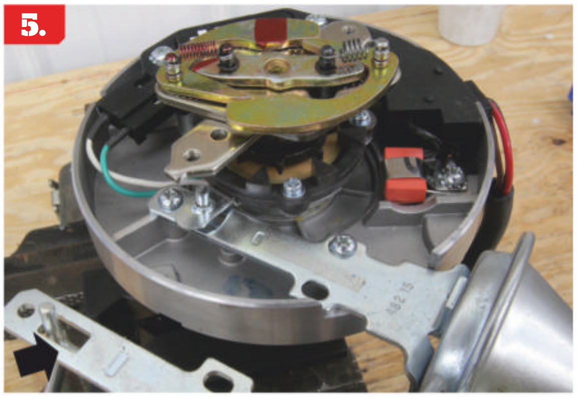


4. This is an MSD distributor that uses a slot in the mechanical advance plate along with a bushing retained by the locking nut. The large black bushing that comes in all-new MSD distributors limits mechanical advance to only 18 degrees of advance while the smallest red bushing allows 28 degrees of mechanical advance. MSD supplies bushings with each distributor or they can be purchased separately.

5.



5. This slot in the vacuum advance canister mount limits its travel and amount of advance it will produce. If the canister delivers more advance than necessary, old-school tuners used to braze a portion of this slot closed to reduce the travel.

6.

6. There are several adjustable vacuum advance canisters available from companies like DUI, Accel, Summit, and others. The amount of timing delivered and the rate of advance can be adjusted using a small Allen wrench inserted into the vacuum nipple, as shown.

7.

7. An easy way to verify part throttle ignition timing is with a dial-back timing light like this one. With the vacuum advance connected at high vacuum at 2,800 rpm the total timing of initial, mechanical, and vacuum advance is 42 degrees.

While cruising at part throttle, we still want to extract the maximum cylinder pressure from the mixture. Because the air and fuel are less densely packed, it burns more slowly so we need to start the combustion process sooner so that it generates a maximum potential push on the crankshaft. Luckily, intake manifold vacuum is a great indicator that the engine is running at part throttle. Intake manifold vacuum is high under light throttle because the throttle blades are nearly closed. As the throttle blades open, vacuum drops and is near 0 at WOT.

Early engine designers discovered they could use manifold vacuum connected to a simple diaphragm device that uses this vacuum to pull a rod that's connected to the distributor baseplate to advance the ignition timing. In the 1960s and 1970s, there were hundreds of different vacuum advance canisters each designed for a specific engine combination.

Getting into specifics, most street engines can enjoy measurably better throttle response, driveability, and fuel mileage by combining vacuum advance with the initial and mechanical settings. As an example, a typical small-block Chevy might need 36 degrees of total timing for best WOT torque and horsepower. But at light throttle, it will need additional timing in the range of 40 to 45 degrees BTDC (or more). Again, each engine will respond a little differently based on static compression ratio, cam timing, combustion efficiency, air/fuel ratio, and a host of other variables.

All vacuum advance numbers are added to the initial and mechanical advance at part throttle. As an example, let's say that we now add vacuum advance to our 15 degrees of initial timing and that we're cruising with an overdrive trans at 70 mph at 2,200 rpm. This puts our mechanical advance curve delivering 14 degrees of timing (total mechanical is not fully advanced at this low engine speed) that combines to produce 29 degrees BTDC of timing. Nearly all street engines will demand more timing than 29 degrees BTDC during part throttle cruising. Let's add another 15 degrees of vacuum advance to enjoy the fruit of optimized ignition timing. This is equal to 44 degrees of total timing BTDC at part throttle.

Some enthusiasts may think that the engine will likely detonate and suffer damage, but this is not the case. Remember, the cylinder pressure is very low at part throttle, which is why it needs this additional timing. Of course, if the engine were running at WOT with that much timing, it would likely detonate. But remember, manifold vacuum drops to near 0 at WOT, so the vacuum advance is not present at high throttle openings. At WOT vacuum advance is not present, so we are back to the 15 degrees initial plus 20 degrees mechanical equal 35 degrees BTDC at WOT.

You can think of vacuum advance as load-based timing if you like because vacuum advance disappears as soon as the manifold vacuum drops below roughly 6 inches of mercury (Hg). Each engine will demand its own variations on this example. Some engines will want less vacuum advance and others will require more. Cylinder heads with less efficient combustion chambers tend to demand more timing than engines using more efficient chambers.

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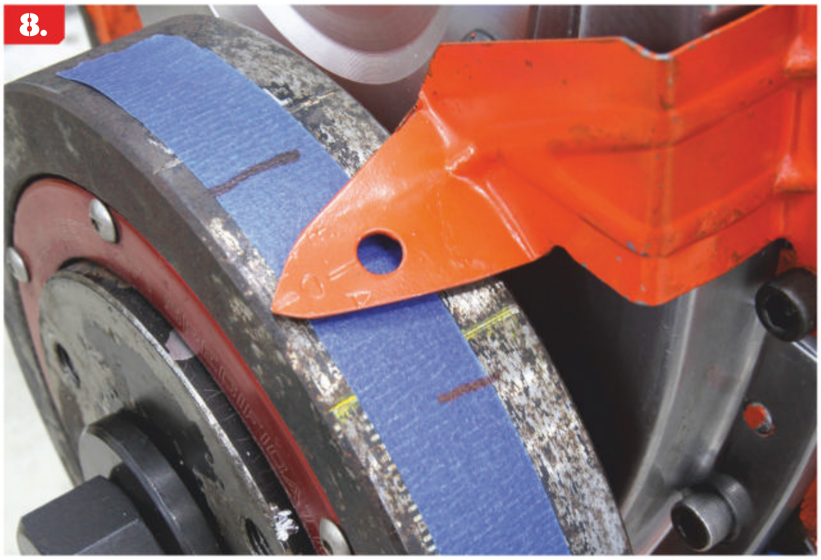
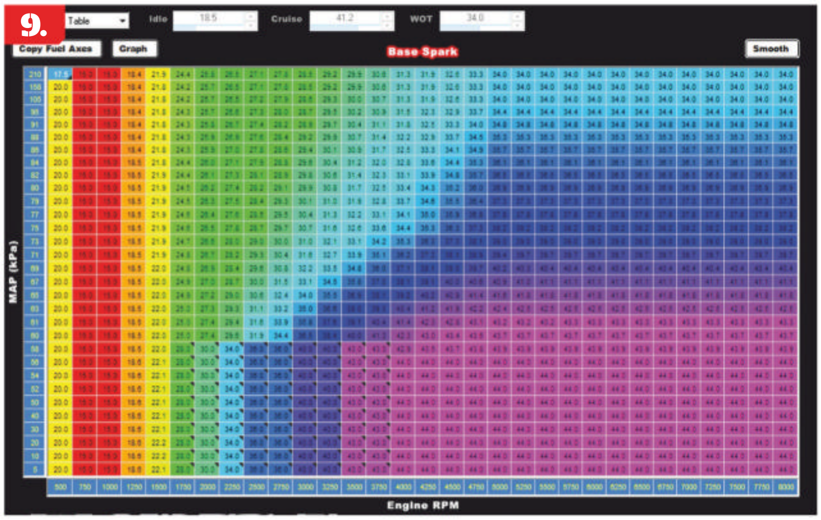


8. All the timing issues discussed in this story assume that the TDC or 0 mark on the harmonic balancer is accurate. But this often is not the case. The only way to know for sure is to use a piston stop, which will establish a position on either side of the TDC mark. If the TDC mark is accurate, the piston will stop at equal distances from the TDC mark. If the distances are not the same, the TDC mark or the pointer should be moved to reflect an accurate position. In this photo, the true TDC on the blue tape is actually off by almost 3 degrees and will require modifying the tab to place the true TDC mark in the correct orientation.

9. This is a copy of the ignition timing from a Holley Terminator-X EFI system. The numbers are somewhat difficult to read. Engine load is expressed in kPa with wide-open throttle at the top and near 0 load at the bottom and with rpm across the bottom scale. Note that at low load near the bottom of the chart at 3,000 rpm this curve offers 40 degrees of ignition advance.

9.



Table

Idle 18.5

Cruise 41.2

WOT 34.0

As a small addition to this overview, engines with the most efficient combustion space will always demand less ignition timing than combustion chambers with a less-efficient design. Older readers may remember when it was common for high-compression small-block Chevy engines from the late 1960s to demand 42-44 degrees of total timing for best power. Today's highly efficient LS engines require much less total ignition timing numbers that are now less than 30 degrees.

There are limitations to this combination of initial, mechanical, and vacuum advance. As mentioned earlier, mechanical advance is a linear function based solely on engine speed. Vacuum advance is also linear with a given vacuum level producing a set amount of advance. An illustration of the limitations of these linear functions is a 468ci El Camino we tuned for a friend where the engine wanted a given initial and mechanical advance combination. But after setting the amount of vacuum advance the engine preferred at cruise, the engine would always lightly detonate at a certain part throttle opening that seemed to occur most often on freeway on-ramps.

We were forced to reduce the total vacuum advance and to slow the rate of vacuum advance in order to prevent light acceleration detonation. This was aggravating because backing off the vacuum advance measurably reduced fuel mileage during long cruises. The eventual solution was to convert to digital ignition since the engine already had a Sniper throttle body fuel injection.

With the ability to set very specific ignition advance numbers, we were able to advance the timing at cruise but still pull a couple of degrees of timing out in the load area where the engine otherwise rattled at part throttle acceleration. This is the advantage of digital control over the ignition that cannot be duplicated with linear advance curves using mechanical devices. It's a small point, but the change to a digital ignition curve improved fuel mileage in that big-block by nearly 1 mpg.

There is much more to tuning the combination of initial, mechanical, and vacuum advance curves than we can cover here but armed with these basics you now have a strong foundation to work through the details for your specific engine combination. It's a rewarding process to watch the engine respond to the changes you command. This is the best part of being a hands-on car guy. It's like instant gratification when the engine immediately runs better after you've made a simple change. ACP

PARTS LIST

DESCRIPTION	PN	SOURCE
Summit HEI advance curve kit, weights, springs	SUM-G5212	Summit
Summit adj. vacuum advance can	HEISUM-850314	Summit
Mr. Gasket advance curve kit, GM points dist.	MRG-928G	Summit
Accel adj. vacuum advance can, GM points dist.	ACC-31034	Summit
MSD timing tape	MSD-8985	Summit

10. Experimenting with initial, mechanical, and vacuum advance for your particular application can deliver a street engine that is not only responsive to throttle but also makes great power with really good fuel mileage as an added benefit.

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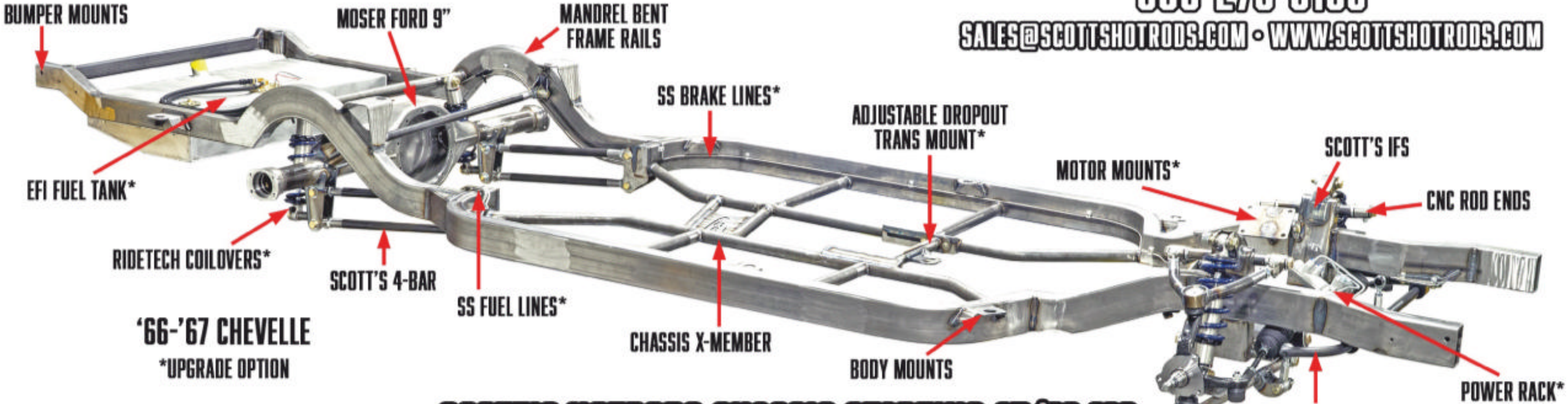
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BY **NICK LICATA** IMAGES BY **NOTSTOCK PHOTOGRAPHY**

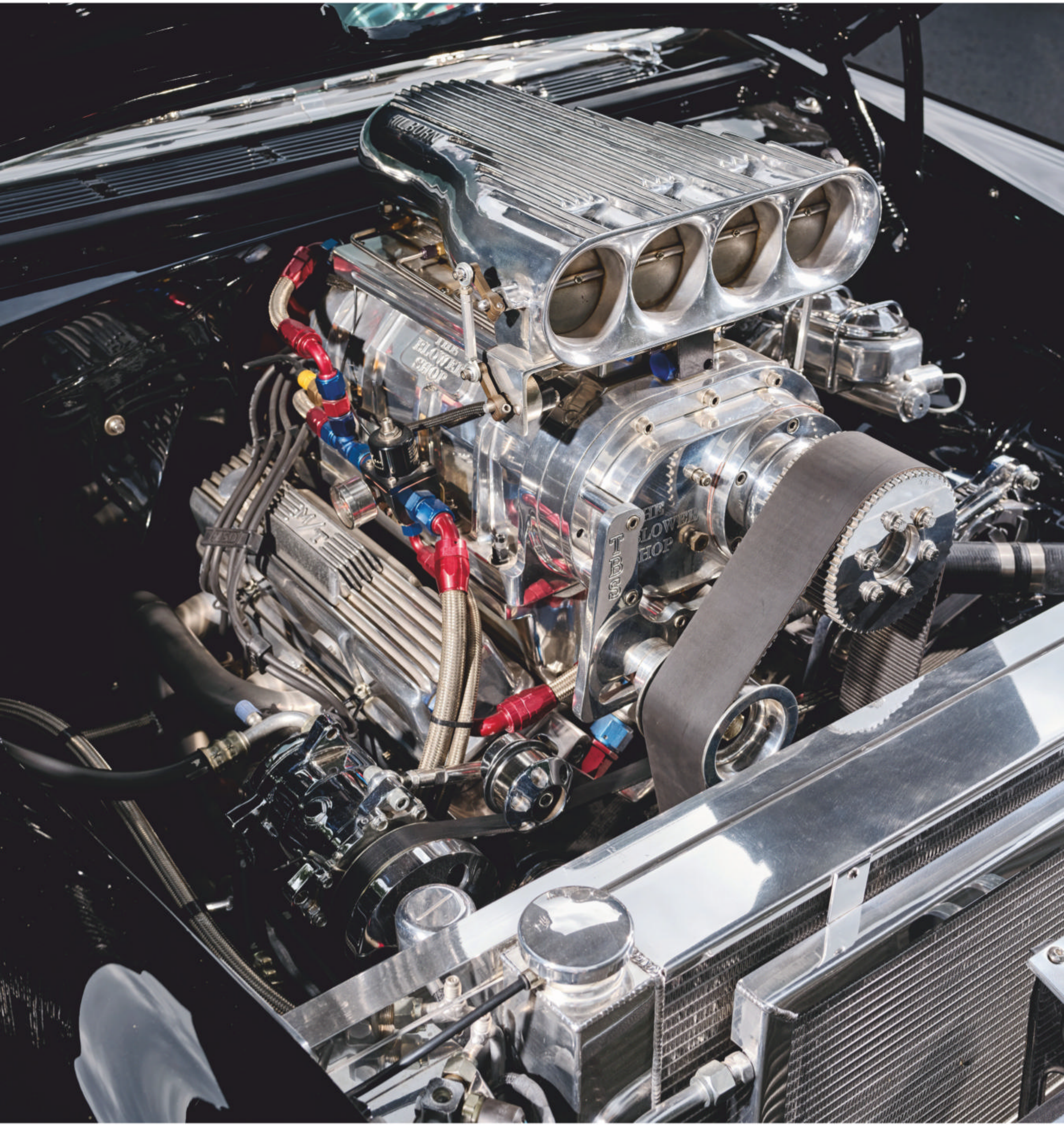
FALFA INSPIRED

TED STONEBURNER'S 1955 CHEVY 150

Fuel Injection

The 1955 Chevy holds iconic status for so many reasons, boasting striking aesthetics with clean lines and classic chrome accents, a distinctive front grille offering a sporty appearance, drawing the attention of consumers. But it wasn't just the look—the car marked the introduction of Chevrolet's first small-block V-8 appearing underhood. The 265ci engine was a powerhouse at the time and set the foundation for Chevy's long-standing reputation for delivering reliable horsepower in affordable vehicles.

Today, that design and performance make the 1955 Chevy a harvestable piece for customizers and hot rodders looking to infuse their own style and options to this timeless-looking hot rod. High accolades for sure, but what got Ted Stoneburner hooked on the car was seeing Bob Falfa's souped-up 1955 on the big screen in the 1973 film *American Graffiti*. "I was a young, impressionable high school teen at the time, and that car, along with Harrison Ford's character as a cocky street racer, just resonated with me and I've wanted one ever since," Ted recalls.


HILBURN
THE BLOWER SHOP
THE BLOWER SHOP
TBS

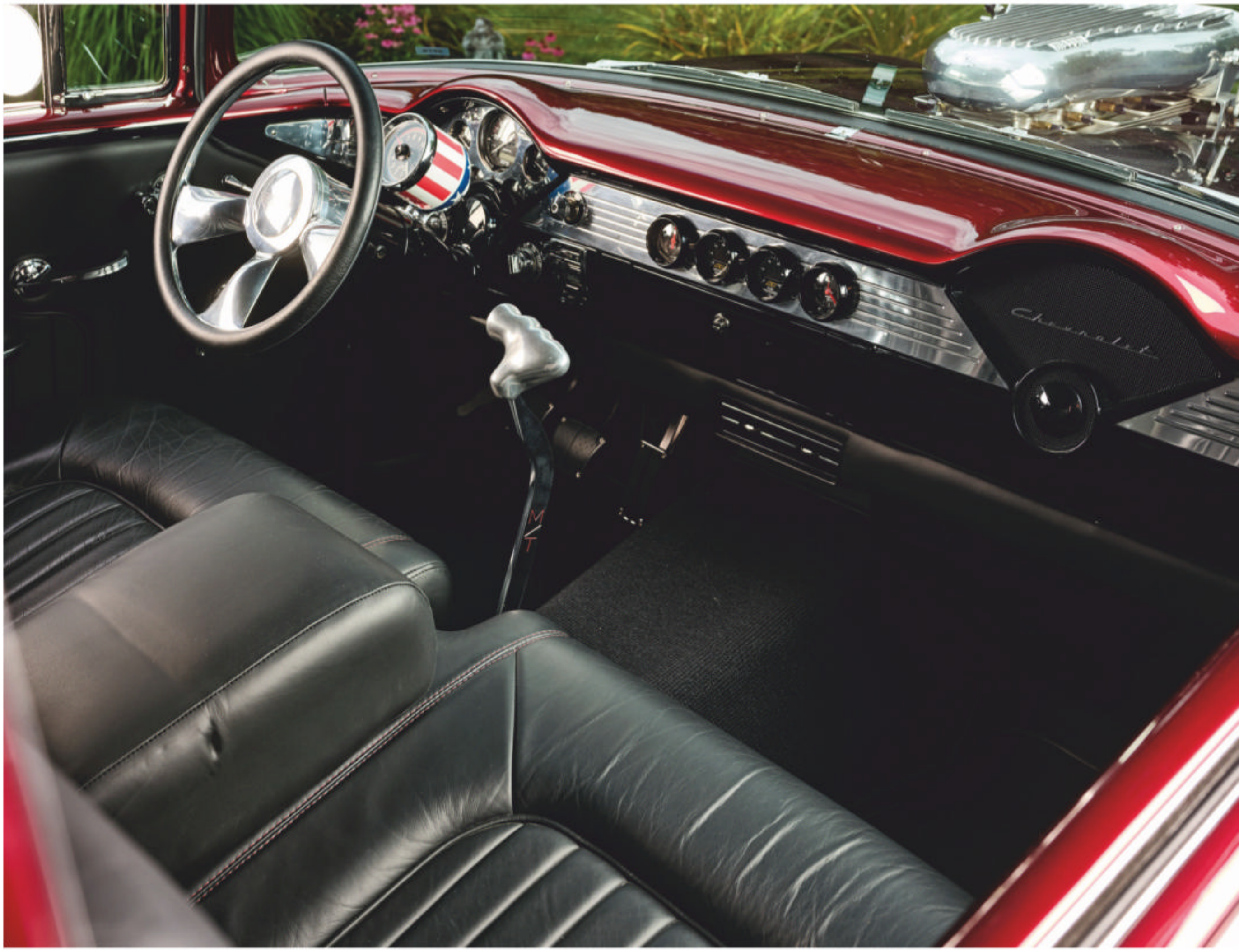
Though it took years, Ted finally found his dream car in 2005 through an eBay listing. It was advertised as a California car that was living in Nevada, so all indications pointed to it being a rust-free example, which Ted reports it pretty much was. Hailing from Wethersfield, Connecticut, Ted is more than familiar with the havoc East Coast winters can inflict on classic cars, so finding a survivor from the West Coast was like a diamond in the rough.

Once the Chevy arrived, it lived up to the description: minimal rust, and it came with a 327, 700-R4 transmission, and "peg-leg" 12-bolt rearend. "I drove the car like that for a while," Ted says. "It didn't have enough power to spin the tire, but the lack of strength wasn't a problem as I was about to change everything in the car by way of a full frame-off restoration along with a suspension and powertrain upgrade."

Ted took the car over to Bill White's shop in Southington, Connecticut, and the two got busy building up the scrap pile by replacing basically everything underneath and under the hood. The anemic 327 was swapped out in favor of a 407ci Dart small-block built by Phil Molski at PMR Performance in Berlin, Connecticut. Molski also did the machining prior to stuffing in 8.71 slugs, steel Eagle crankshaft, and Eagle rods. A Comp Cams solid roller orchestrates the valve timing, and AFR 215 heads provide excellent airflow. The crowning touch is the original 1960's Hilborn injector hat atop a 6-71 blower from the Blower Shop perched on a TBS intake manifold. The polished hardware also features Moon valve covers to complete the 1960s vibe.

Custom 1$^7/_8$-inch tube headers with 3½-inch collectors feed to a custom 3-inch aluminum exhaust and Superflow 44 mufflers. Ted occasionally delegates the NOWEEDS electric exhaust cutouts to allow the 540hp small-block to announce its presence with authority.

Delivering power to the rear wheels is a TREMEC TKO 600 five-speed transmission beefed up by Forte's Parts Connection in Framingham, Massachusetts, and is backed up by a RAM twin-disc clutch. A Detroit Locker along with 4.11 gears and 35-spline Dutchman axles reside in a Strange Engineering 9-inch housing. The proven combination propels the hard-launching Chevy without breaking a sweat.



KOREK
DESIGNS

A Fatman Fabrications front subframe is mated to an Art Morrison Enterprises GT Sport four-bar rear suspension system. Bill White put his mad welding and fabrication skills to work and performed subtle frame modifications to tie it all together. Strange coilover shocks ride on all four corners while up front is an AME rack-and-pinion steering system. A PBS Bosch Hydro-Boost brake system activates the Wilwood binders for smooth and effective transition from speed modulated by the Clayton Machine Works brake pedal. The Raceline one-off custom wheels adhere to the Chevy's classic style while the Goodyear Eagle rubber offers excellent road-gripping performance.

The interior boasts a seductive backdrop featuring gray leather seats and door panels along with gray loop carpet accented with a host of aftermarket gauges to monitor operations while complying with the classic Chevy tone. Rich Perez at R.P. Interiors (Horseheads, New York) is responsible for the custom installation work and keeping the Chevy true to its vintage roots. The factory dash was treated to a Boese Engineering insert populated with Auto Meter Vintage Series gauges. The signed Don Garlits Dixco tach strapped to the Ididit steering column takes us back to the early 1960s drag racing scene, while the original 1960s Lakewood bolt-in rollcage keeps us there. Korek Designs in New Berlin, Pennsylvania, color matched it to the car's exterior hue prior to installation.

Speaking of the exterior, the Korek crew smoothed the sheetmetal and gaped the gaps prior to laying down the captivating two-tone mix of PPG Brandywine and Pure Black, which pays homage to the car's vintage spirit while utilizing a more modern color scheme. In another old-school move, Korek cut the factory hood to make room for the Hilborn injector hat—it's a time-honored exercise designed for form and function. Further custom touches include a one-off aluminum tube grille, shaved driprails, removed door and trunk locks, one-piece custom front bumper, and a modified 1955 Nomad bumper out back. Bar Plating in Meriden, Connecticut, meticulously brought the chrome bits back to a showroom shine.

"Doing a frame-off restoration was a lot more work and money than I had bargained for, but with the help of my friend Bill White, we got it done," Ted says. "Yeah, it took nearly seven years, but it's the car I've wanted since my high school days. It came out exactly how I wanted—sleek, low, and fast. On top of that it looks absolutely awesome."

"The car has brought along some great memories—from spending the day with my kids at car shows, to letting them have a chance behind the wheel was priceless. It's a car I still enjoy today, and if I had to do it all over again, I wouldn't change a thing."

Ted's 1955 Chevy is nothing short of spectacular. It's full of swagger, old-school flair, and a whole lot of horsepower—a car that even Bob Falfa would be proud to drive.

MPH
OIL
WATER

TECH ✓

OWNER: Ted Stoneburner, Wethersfield, Connecticut
VEHICLE: 1955 Chevy 150

Engine

TYPE: Dart block
MACHINING: Phil Molski PMR Racing (Berlin, CT)
ASSEMBLY: PMR Racing
TUNING: Paul Albino at Total Induction Tuning (South Windsor, CT)
DISPLACEMENT: 407 ci
COMPRESSION RATIO: 8.7:1
BORE: 4.156
STROKE: 3.57
CYLINDER HEADS: AFR
ROTATING ASSEMBLY: Eagle crankshaft, Eagle H-beam rods, JE Pistons
CAMSHAFT: Comp Cams hydraulic roller
INDUCTION: The Blower Shop polished 6-71 blower (4 pounds boost), original Hilborn injection hat, TBS intake manifold
FUEL INJECTION: Dan Fodge Injection
EXHAUST: Custom $1^{7}/_{8}$-inch headers, 3-inch aluminized exhaust by Billy White, Superflow 44 mufflers
VALVE COVERS: Moon with M/T faux breathers
ACCESSORY DRIVE: Street & Performance SBC blower serpentine system
ANCILLARIES: PRC aluminum radiator, Corvette reverse-flow water pump, Spal dual electric fans, Big Stuff 3, MSD 6 AL box, Rock Valley 19-gallon fuel tank
OUTPUT: 540 rwhp at 5,500 rpm, 529 lb-ft at 5,500 rpm

Drivetrain

TRANSMISSION: TREMEC TKO 600 five-speed by Forte's Parts Connection (Framingham, MA)
CLUTCH: Ram
SHIFTER: M/T
DRIVESHAFT: FleetPride 3-inch
REAR AXLE: Strange 9-inch housing, 4.11 gears, Detroit locker, Dutchman 35-spline axles

Chassis

FRONT SUSPENSION: Fatman Fabrications subframe, Strange coilover shocks, AME rack-and-pinion steering
REAR SUSPENSION: Art Morrison GT Sport four-bar, Strange coilover shocks
BRAKES: Wilwood 12-inch rotors, six-piston calipers front, Wilwood 11-inch rotors, four-piston calipers rear, PBS Bosch Hydro-Boost brake assist
FRAME MODS: Welded and fabrication by Bill White

Wheels & Tires

WHEELS: Raceline one-off custom 18x7 front, 20x10 rear
TIRES: Goodyear Eagle 225/40R18 front, 305/35R20 rear

Interior

UPHOLSTERY: Gray leather
DOOR PANELS: Custom
CARPET: Gray loop
INSTALLATION: R.P. Interiors (Horseheads, NY)
SEATS: Custom bench
SEATBELTS: Juliano's three-point
STEERING: Ididit column
SHIFTER: M/T
PEDALS: Clayton Machine Works
DASH: Stock with Boese insert
INSTRUMENTATION: Auto Meter Vintage Series, Don Garlits Dixco Tach
WIRING: American Autowire by Paul Albino
SOUND SYSTEM: Secret Audio, JBL speakers installed by Paul Albino

Exterior

BODYWORK & PAINT: Korek Designs (New Berlin, PA)
PAINTER: Ryan Korek
PAINT: PPG Brandywine and Pure Black
HOOD: Factory, modified by Korek Designs
GRILLE: Custom aluminum by Korek Designs
FRONT BUMPER: Custom
REAR BUMPER: 1955 Chevy Nomad modified
HEADLIGHTS: LED
PLATING: Bar Plating (Meriden, CT)

BY **RON CERIDONO** IMAGES BY **CHADLY JOHNSON**

1.

1. MetalWorks' Dave Williams contemplates doing what General Motors didn't do: make the headlight bezels of this 1963 Chevy II Nova fit properly.

NIP & TUCK

GIVING A CHEVY II A FACELIFT

Go to any automotive event and chances are the cars with the most outrageous features will draw the attention of the casual onlooker. But for true enthusiasts it's the subtle details, like the extra effort put into body fit and panel alignment that catch the eye of the knowledgeable. These are the cars that get better the more you look at them, which is typical of the cars that come out of MetalWorks Classic Auto Restoration in Eugene, Oregon.

Case in point is a 1963 Chevy II. This GM line of compact cars was meant to compete with the likes of the Rambler, Ford's Falcon, Chrysler's Valiant/Lancer, and a number of GM products, including Chevy's own Corvair. Like all the cars in this class, the Chevy II was affordable with a base price around $2,100.

Like most cars of the era, Chevy's quality control was described by some automotive writers as "lacking" in 1963. Poor door and window fit were common complaints and body panels were often gapped and aligned poorly. But one of the most noticeable issues with the Chevy II shown here was the mismatch between the headlight bezels and the front fenders. It makes one wonder if the team designing the fenders and those responsible for the headlight bezels ever met. There was no way the crew at MetalWorks was going to let something like this go unresolved, so master metal man Dave Williams was assigned the task of making things right.

The first step in resolving the Chevy's fitment issue was to come up with replacements for the rough original headlight bezels—fortunately a new old stock set was found on eBay. The next chore was to modify the fenders to make them fit. Williams carefully split the front edge of the first fender. He then made horizontal relief cuts to allow it to be recontoured to fit the headlight bezels properly. With the first fender altered, cardboard templates were made to be used to make the second fender the exact same shape.

While talking to Williams about what was done, he did offer some advice. Although some builders use straight carbon dioxide when MIG welding mild steel (because it's cheap), Williams suggests 75 percent argon and 25 percent carbon dioxide. He also suggests 0.023 "EZ Grind" welding wire. This softer wire makes grinding the welds much easier.

There's no question that over-the-top modifications are attention getters, but it's often the simple details that make a car stand out. Sometimes a nip and a tuck are all it takes.

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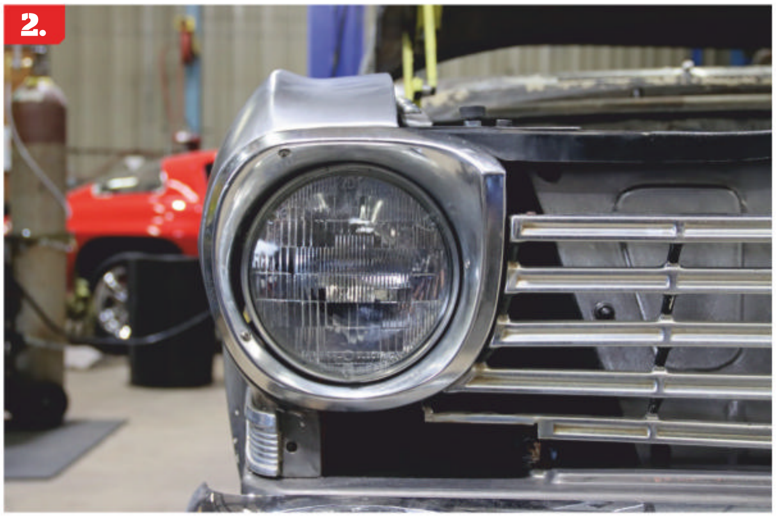
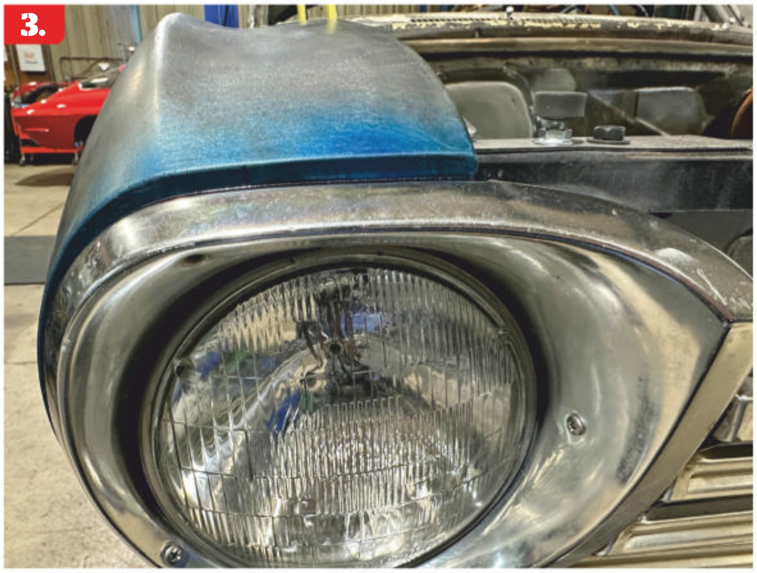


2. This is the result of Williams' metal sculpting expertise; the headlight bezels and the fenders of the Chevy now blend together perfectly.

3. From the factory this is how the headlight bezels and the fenders fit together, or more to the point how they didn't fit together.

3.



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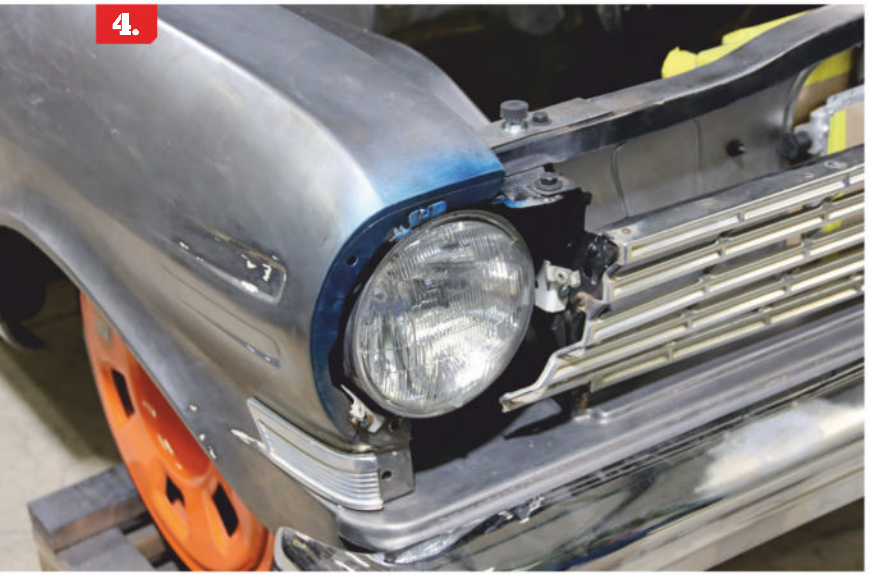


5.

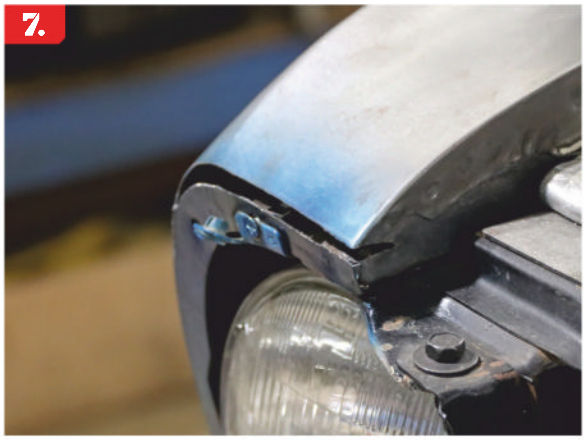
6.

4. The plan to correct the poor-fitting headlight bezels was to make a series of cuts in the fenders and reshape them.

5. First, a horizontal cut was made across the front of each fender with a reciprocating saw.

6. Next, a cut-off wheel was used to make short cuts in the edges of the fenders inside the hood opening.

7.



7. Here are the completed cuts made to the front of the first fender to be modified.

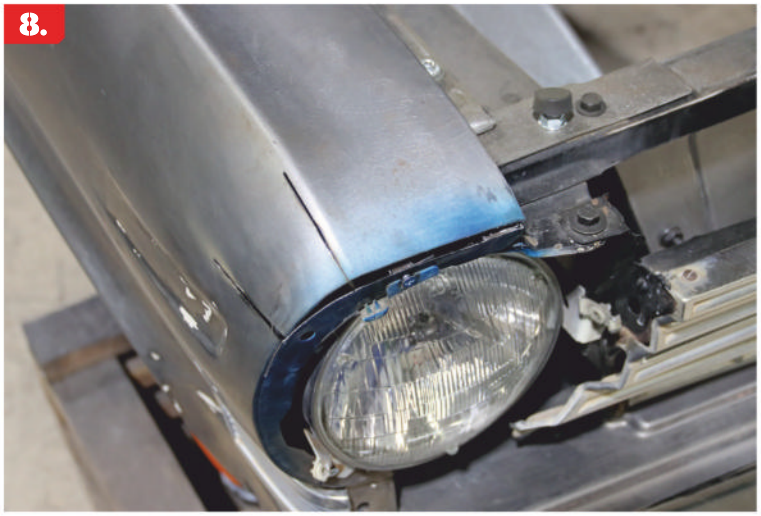
8. To allow the front of the fender to be reshaped several relief cuts were also made.

9. The top edge of the fender was recontoured with a few deft blows from a body hammer.

10. After a test-fit of the headlight bezel, the top of the first fender to be modified was tack-welded in place.

11. Here, the top edge of the fender has been tack-welded to the headlight bucket support.

8.



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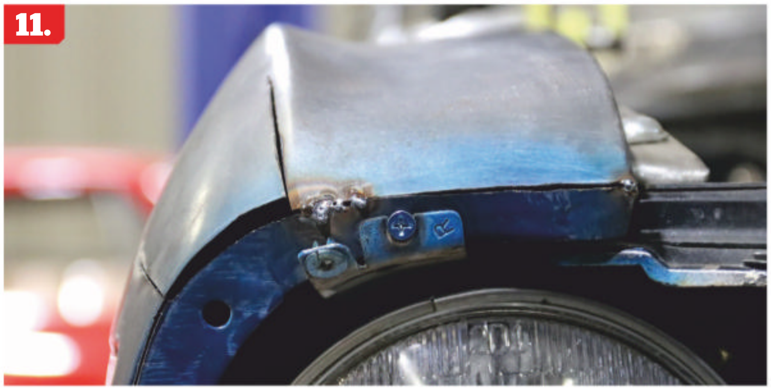

12. After welding the front edge of the fender to the headlight bucket support the joint was ground smooth.

13. Here the relief cuts in the fender have been tack welded together and the fit of the headlight bezel was checked once more.

12.

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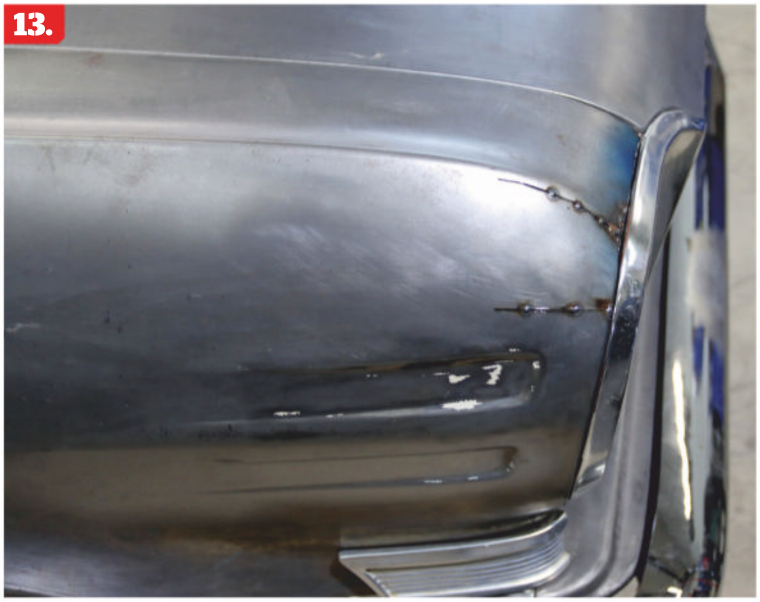

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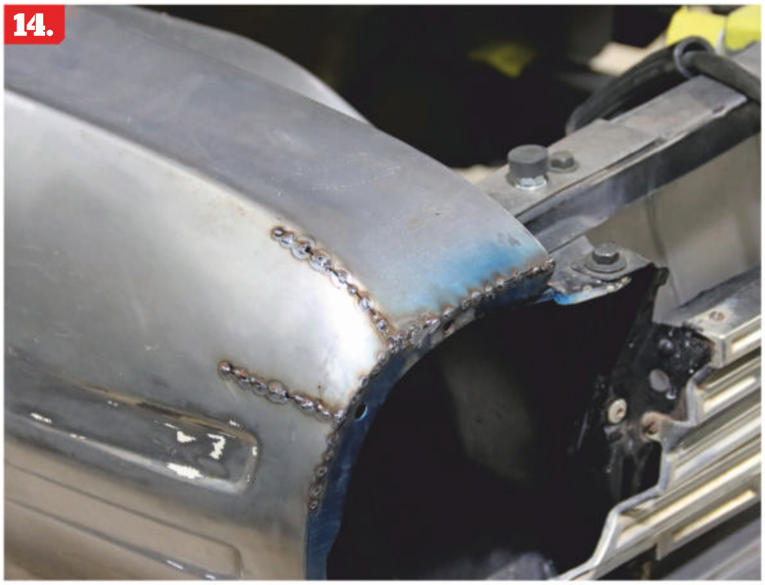

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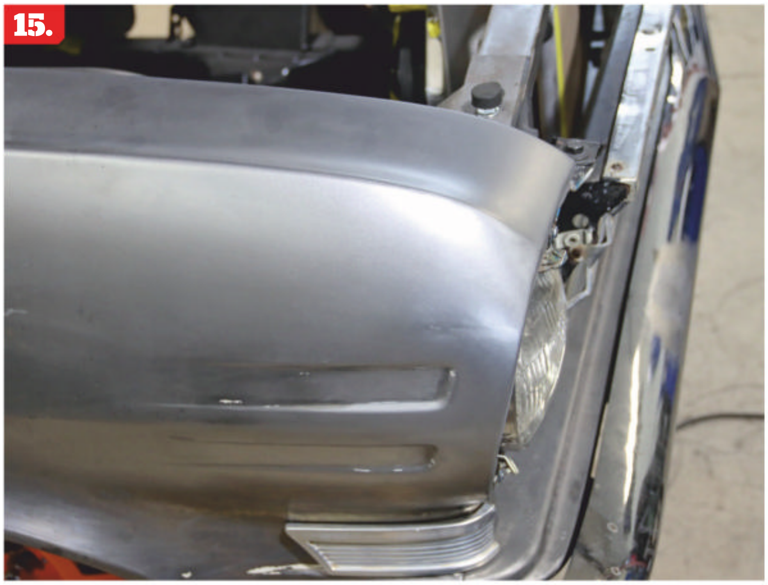

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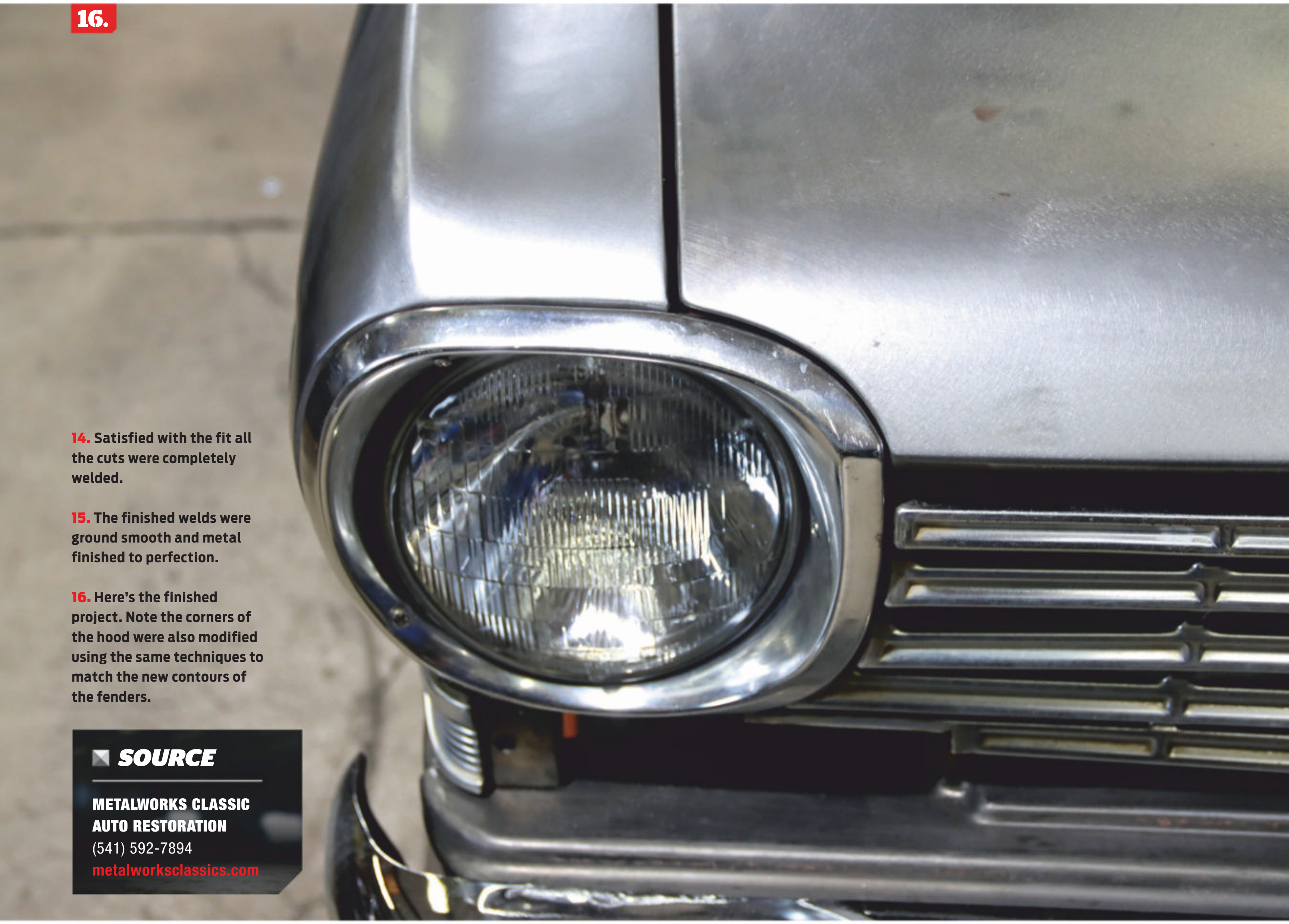

14. Satisfied with the fit all the cuts were completely welded.

15. The finished welds were ground smooth and metal finished to perfection.

16. Here's the finished project. Note the corners of the hood were also modified using the same techniques to match the new contours of the fenders.

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MID-AMERICA STREET ROD NATIONALS
MAY 23RD – 25TH, 2025
OZARK EMPIRE FAIRGROUNDS
SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI

STREET ROD NATIONALS EAST
JUNE 6TH – 8TH, 2025
YORK EXPO CENTER
YORK, PENNSYLVANIA

MOBILE BAY STREET ROD NATIONALS
JUNE 20TH & 21ST, 2025
THE GROUNDS
MOBILE, ALABAMA

ROCKY MOUNTAIN STREET ROD NATIONALS
JUNE 27TH - 29TH, 2025
COLORADO STATE FAIRGROUNDS
PUEBLO, COLORADO

56TH STREET ROD NATIONALS
JULY 31ST – AUGUST 3RD, 2025
KENTUCKY EXPOSITION CENTER
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

QUAD CITIES STREET ROD NATIONALS
AUGUST 15TH & 16TH, 2025
MISSISSIPPI VALLEY FAIR
DAVENPORT, IOWA

NORTHEAST STREET ROD NATIONALS
SEPTEMBER 12TH & 13TH, 2025
CHAMPLAIN VALLEY EXPOSITION
BURLINGTON, VERMONT

STREET ROD NATIONALS NORTH
SEPTEMBER 19TH & 20TH, 2025
KALAMAZOO COUNTY EXPO CENTER
KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN

STREET ROD NATIONALS SOUTH
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NSRA EVENTS

Reincarnation

BRIAN MYERS’ **1970** CHEVELLE SS

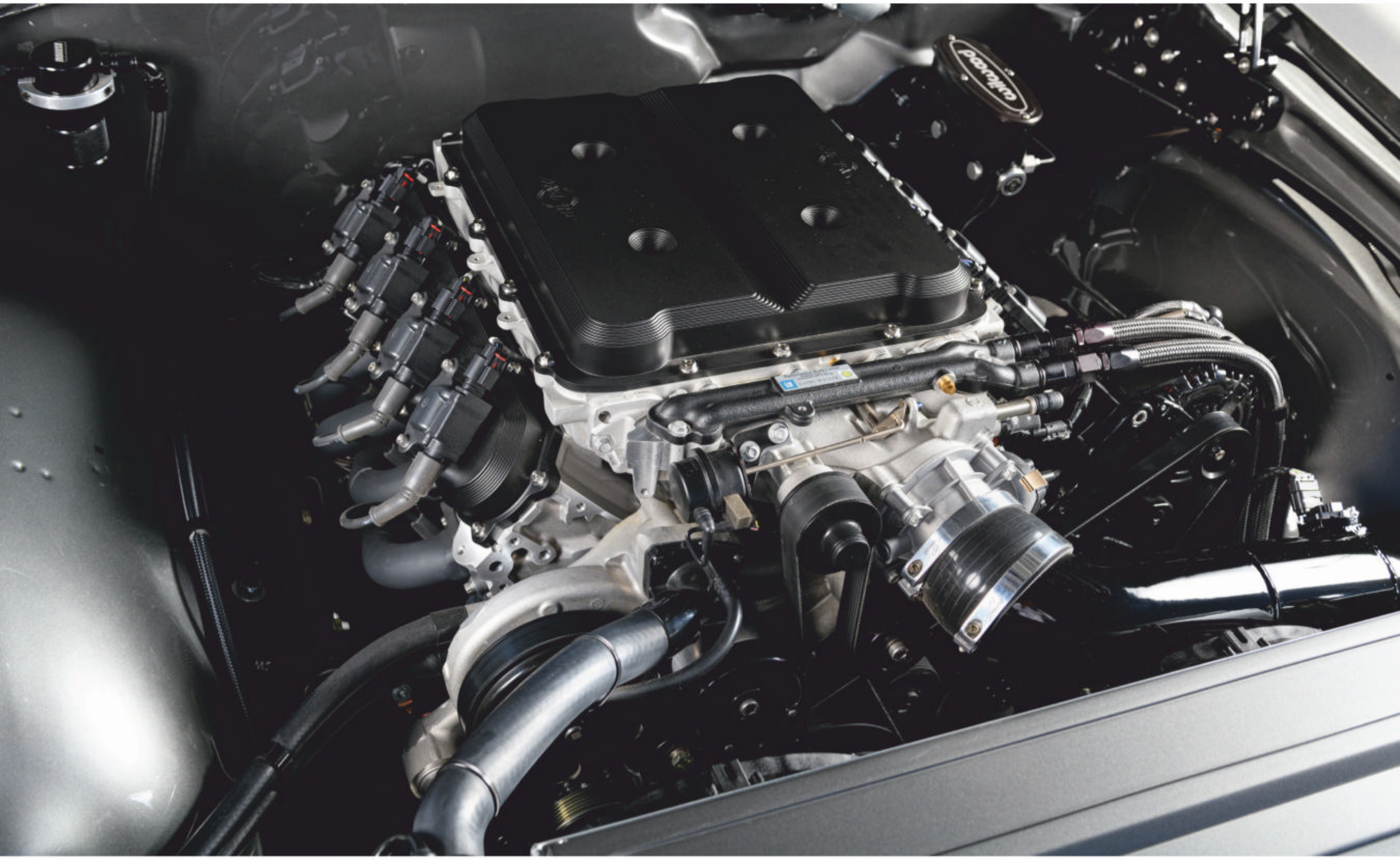
BY **NICK LICATA** IMAGES BY **LUKE MUNNELL**

It’s not uncommon for guys who grew up in the late 1960s and 1970s to gravitate toward building the muscle car they’ve always wanted—typically one from back in their high school days but they just didn’t have the cash to do so at the time. Fast-forward 30-or-so years and decades of service in the workforce has enabled many the financial freedom to finally build that classic muscle car they’ve always wanted.

Brian Myers is one of those guys who harkens back to his high school days when many of his friends were driving cool hot rods, and one friend who owned a distinctive 1970 Chevelle. “That car was just so cool to me, and I’ve wanted it ever since,” Brian recalls.

At the time, Brian had a 1967 C-J-5 his dad bought brand new and handed down to him to use as his daily driver. Unfortunately, the Jeep was stolen from the parking lot during his high school’s homecoming football game. A year later the Jeep was found at the bottom of Oakland Bay. To make a long story short, Brian retrieved it and in true hot rodder fashion, turned it into a sand drag racer, and beat on it like that for a few years. Now that’s what we call making Limoncello out of lemons.

As Brian navigated life’s journey, he regularly thought about that 1970 Chevelle and kept it on his “wish list” for so many years. Finally, in 2001 he found a 1970 Chevelle SS in Phoenix. It was black on black with white rally stripes and even came with the build sheet. The original 396 was long gone, but the car had a healthy 454 and a TH400 trans. The engine ran good and the interior was like new. “When the owner took me out for a testdrive and banged through the gears, I was instantly sold on the car and ended up buying it right then and there,” Brian says.



"I was living in Colorado at the time and drove the car when weather permitted and stored it at a friend's heated garage during the winter," Brian mentions. "In 2009, I moved the car to Lake Havasu City, Arizona, and being I wasn't driving the car much, it started leaking from just about everywhere, so it sat even longer."

In 2019, Brian made the decision to get the car running right while at the same time throwing a bunch of upgrades its way. He purchased a ZZ572 crate engine, and an upgraded chassis to handle the car's newfound horsepower. From there he bought new suspension, brakes, and tires, but he soon realized it was time for a complete overhaul from the ground up. The "snowball effect" was on.

He brought the car to Lakeside Speed and Shine in Lake Havasu, Arizona, where he and Lakeside owner Jim McKay put together an elaborate plan to turn his car into not only a street performer, but an absolute stunner outside and in. McKay and his crew are a force to be reckoned with when it comes to building high-quality muscle cars, and with Brian's Chevelle being in decent shape from the start was a good candidate for the Lakeside makeover.

Initially, Brian had envisioned using a blower on the big-block, but hood clearance was an issue and he was reluctant to have a blower poking through the hood as he liked the smooth hood line as it is. Discussing alternatives with McKay led to using a Chevrolet Performance LT4—a supercharged 376ci mill that would deliver 650 hp without disrupting the car's classic aesthetics. This way Brian still got a supercharged engine combined with the benefits of reliability. Equipped with Patriot headers, Lakeside custom 3-inch stainless exhaust, and MagnaFlow mufflers, the ensemble features black Cerakote to perfectly complement the engine's muscular character.

The transmission and drivetrain upgrades were essential to ensure Brian's Chevelle could handle the increased power output. The Lakeside team installed a GM 4L75E automatic transmission along with a GM 12-bolt rearend, Eaton Truetrac posi unit, and 3.73 gears. This setup delivers smooth, seamless shifting and the strength to handle aggressive launches off the line.

Performance handling and ride quality come by way of a Ridetech front suspension system featuring Wilwood Pro spindles, control arms, and Ridetech ShockWaves. A Borgeson quick-ratio steering box delivers a balanced mix of stability and agility. The rear received a Ridetech four-link setup along with ShockWaves. An AccuAir air suspension system provides ride height options for various driving conditions. Wilwood brakes, with 14-inch rotors and six-piston calipers in the front, and four-piston calipers in the rear, were added for optimal stopping power.

SNSSTR

Beyond performance, Brian also wanted his Chevelle to be visually stunning inside and out, and the interior overhaul became one of his favorite parts of the build process. The Lakeside team worked with Brian to create a fully customized interior that would win him the Best Interior award at the 2024 Grand National Roadster Show. The TMI Distressed Red leather upholstery and seats offer a bold, refined look that complements the Chevelle's aggressive exterior. The original dash was fitted with a TMI dashpad and Dakota Digital gauges while a Flaming River column and Billet Specialties steering wheel create a functionally stylish motif. A Kicker head unit armed with strategically placed speakers and twin 10-inch subwoofers provide the soundtrack, and a Vintage Air HVAC system keeps the cabin climate-controlled.

The exterior transformation was equally impressive, with a focus on balancing classic design with custom touches. McKay's team shaved the Chevelle's dripails, side markers, and trim for a smooth, sleek profile. They prepped the body to perfection prior to spraying on a gorgeous layer of Matrix GM Shark Gray pigment—a modern choice that complements the Chevelle's classic lines. Details like the painted and Cerakoted grille, as well as smoothed and tucked bumpers, bring a sleek custom touch to the otherwise bulbus ride. Ringbrothers side mirrors, Kindig It door handles, Dapper Lighting headlights, and Dakota Digital taillights add a good amount of modern flair to the overall design.

To accentuate the car's refined look, Brian chose custom Hot Rods By Boyd (HRBB) wheels, 19s up front and 20s out back, wrapped in Michelin Pilot Sport rubber. A formula that offers plenty of grip for those instances when Brian takes out the car for a "spirited" drive. With AllCoat in Kingman, Arizona, handling the powdercoating on various parts, the final product was a testament to Lakeside's attention to detail and craftsmanship.

For Brian Myers, this restoration fulfilled a lifelong dream. After two years of meticulous work, his Chevelle emerged as a masterpiece, combining vintage spirit and modern performance. Reflecting on the journey, he shared, "It's fast, beautiful, and I couldn't be happier with the outcome. Jim McKay and the crew at Lakeside absolutely killed it on this build. I've never seen a 1970 Chevelle done to this level. It's hard to believe this is the same car I bought nearly 25 years ago."

> ***"WHEN THE OWNER TOOK ME OUT FOR A TESTDRIVE AND BANGED THROUGH THE GEARS, I WAS INSTANTLY SOLD ON THE CAR AND ENDED UP BUYING IT RIGHT THEN AND THERE."***

TECH

OWNER: Brian Myers, Lake Havasu, Arizona
VEHICLE: 1970 Chevelle SS

Engine

TYPE: Chevrolet Performance LT4
DISPLACEMENT: 376 ci
COMPRESSION RATIO: 10.0:1
BORE: 4.065
STROKE: 3.622
CYLINDER HEADS: A356-T6 rotocast aluminum
ROTATING ASSEMBLY: Forged steel crankshaft, forged powdered-metal steel connecting rods, forged aluminum pistons
CAMSHAFT: Hydraulic roller
INDUCTION: GM-Eaton TVS R1740 1.7L supercharger
ASSEMBLY: GM
EXHAUST: Patriot 1$^{7}/_{8}$-inch headers, Lakeside custom stainless 3-inch exhaust, and MagnaFlow mufflers, all black Cerakote
VALVE COVERS AND SUPERCHARGER LID: MPI
ACCESSORY DRIVE: Street Machine Works (formerly Drive Junky)
ANCILLARIES: Eddie Motorsports hood hinges, SPAL electric fans, Griffin aluminum radiator
OUTPUT: 650 hp

Drivetrain

TRANSMISSION: GM 4L75E
SHIFTER: Lokar
REAR AXLE: GM 12-bolt, Eaton Truetrac posi, 3.73 gears

Chassis

FRONT SUSPENSION: Wilwood Pro spindles, Ridetech control arms, Ridetech ShockWaves, 1$^{1}/_{8}$-inch sway bar, Borgeson quick-ratio steering box, AccuAir air suspension
REAR SUSPENSION: Ridetech four-link, Ridetech ShockWaves, AccuAir air suspension
BRAKES: Wilwood 14-inch rotors, six-piston calipers front, 14-inch rotors, four-piston calipers rear
SUSPENSION MODS: All parts powdercoated by Allcoat (Kingman, AZ)

Wheels & Tires

WHEELS: Hot Rods By Boyd 19x8.5 front, 20x11 rear
TIRES: Michelin Pilot Sport 265/35R19, 295/30R20

Interior

UPHOLSTERY: TMI distressed red leather
INSTALLATION: Lakeside Speed and Shine (Lake Havasu, AZ)
INSULATION: Vibro Solutions
SEATS: TMI
DOOR PANELS: TMI
STEERING: Flaming River steering column, Billet Specialties steering wheel
SHIFTER: Lokar
DASH: Stock with TMI dashpad
INSTRUMENTATION: Dakota Digital
WIRING: American Autowire by Lakeside
HVAC: Vintage Air
CONTROL PANEL: Vintage Air
SOUND SYSTEM: Kicker head unit, Kicker speakers, Kicker twin 10-inch sub
INSTALLATION: Lakeside

Exterior

BODYWORK: Shaved dripRails, removed side markers, and trim by Lakeside
PAINT: Matrix GM Shark Gray by Lakeside
GRILLE: Stock, painted, and Cerakoted
FRONT BUMPER: Stock, painted, tucked, and smoothed
REAR BUMPER: Stock, painted, tucked, and smoothed
HEADLIGHTS: Dapper Lighting
TAILLIGHTS: Dakota Digital
SIDE MIRRORS: Ringbrothers
DOOR HANDLES: Kindig It
POWDERCOATING: Allcoat

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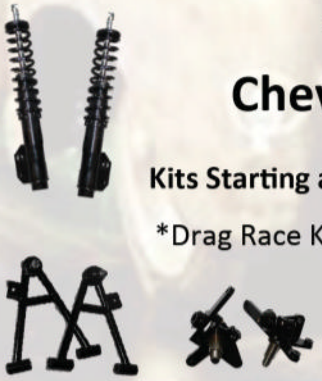

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COMPLETE CONTROL

BY **RYAN MANSON** IMAGES BY **THE AUTHOR**

With the old SBC/Muncie combo removed from our buddy Bruce Valley's 1957 Chevy and the LS3/4L60E resting in its place, it's time to sort out shifter requirements as well as our pedal options. Valley liked the floor shift setup of the Muncie and wanted to retain said location of shifter. Easy enough. But when it came to pedal options, that got a little more muddled since the stock throttle pedal would not be compatible with the LS3's drive-by-wire requirement. As luck would have it, Lokar Performance Products had options for that as well as the floor shifter, even going so far as to offer an upgrade to the original brake pedal that would result in not only a better-looking pedal arm, but the ability to match a pair of throttle/brake pedal pads.

Pulling the existing carpet up, and with the Muncie shifter removed, exposed a fairly large hole in the floor, with a few previous repairs being evident. That would make installing a Lokar floor-mounted shifter a little easier, but the previous "repairs" meant we had a little bit of sheetmetal work that would be required once the shifter was in place. Thankfully, mounting the shifter is as simple as picking a location, drilling the four mounting holes, and bolting the shifter in place. Next, a slot in the floor needs to be cut for the shift lever. From there, it's a matter of trimming the threaded rod and connecting the shifter to the trans. A few more adjustments and the installation is complete.

Mounting the Lokar drive-by-wire pedal required slightly more work, as a bracket needed to be fabricated to get the pedal position just right in the Tri-Five. The brake pedal arm installation was pretty simple, as it's basically a direct swap for the original unit, using a few OG parts as well.

The inclusion of Lokar's line of products resulted in a cohesive look when it came to the pedal assembly, especially given the alternative of the OE plastic GM DBW pedal and the 1957's rubber brake pedal pad. The Restomod series of pedal pads look like they could have come stock in the 1957. The alternative to Lokar's floor shifter, at least when it comes to an OE option, is basically non-existent, so the option for a bolt-in shifter with the features that come as standard on all Lokar shifters truly is a solution where an alternative doesn't exist. They function as good as they look, and that's the most important part.

1.

1. Lokar shifters are available in four different varieties: case mount *(shown)*, tail mount, cable-operated floor mount, and floor mount.

SHIFT, BRAKE, AND THROTTLE OPTIONS FOR A TRI-FIVE CHEVY

SOURCES

CLAMPDOWN COMPETITION
clampdowncomp.com

LOKAR PERFORMANCE PRODUCTS
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lokar.com

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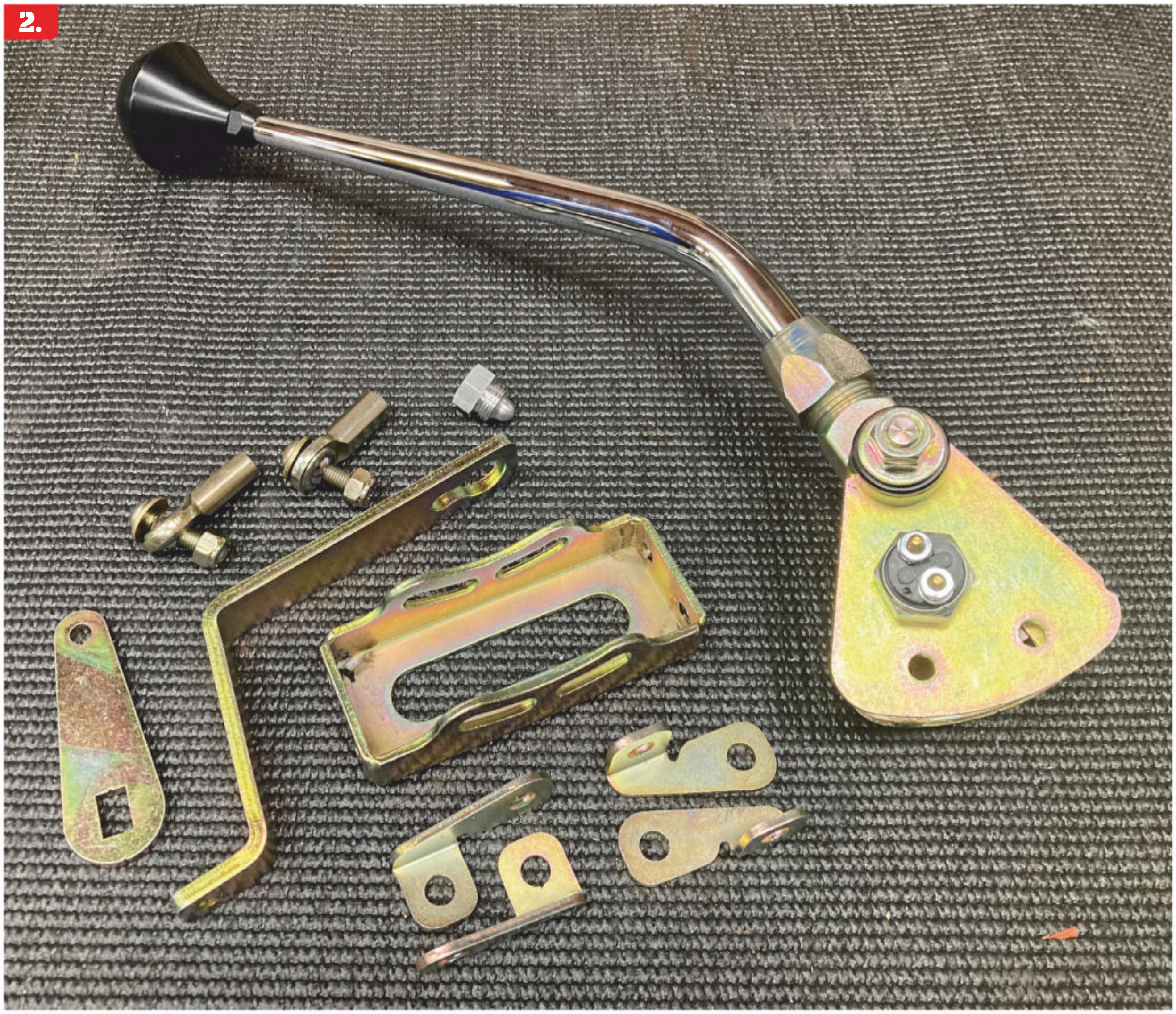
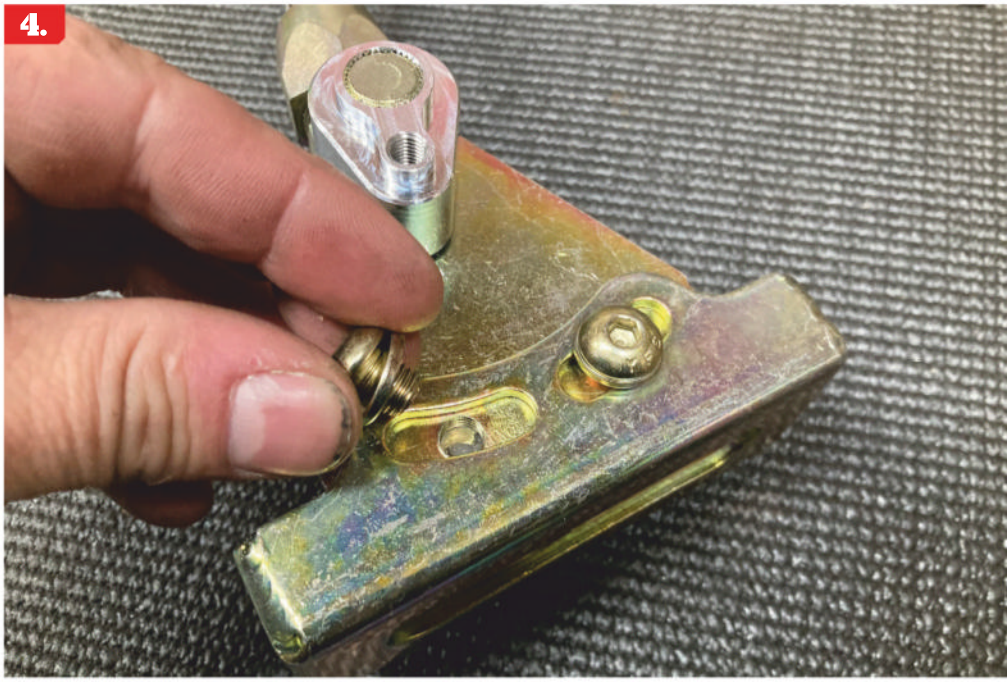


2. Bruce Valley's 1957 already had a hole in the floor from the previous Muncie shifter, so we opted for a Lokar floor-mount unit, which will give us the most flexibility when it comes to mounting location. Lokar PN FM-4L60E-C-KB identifies it as a floor mount model for a 4L60E transmission with a 12-inch, single-bend lever and deco black shift knob.

3.

3. Lokar provides all hardware necessary for installation.

4.



4. The floor-mount mounting bracket is mated to the shifter assembly with the shortest ($^3/_8$-inch) $^5/_{16}$-inch -24 fasteners. The curved, slotted holes allow the angle of the shifter to be fine-tuned once in place.

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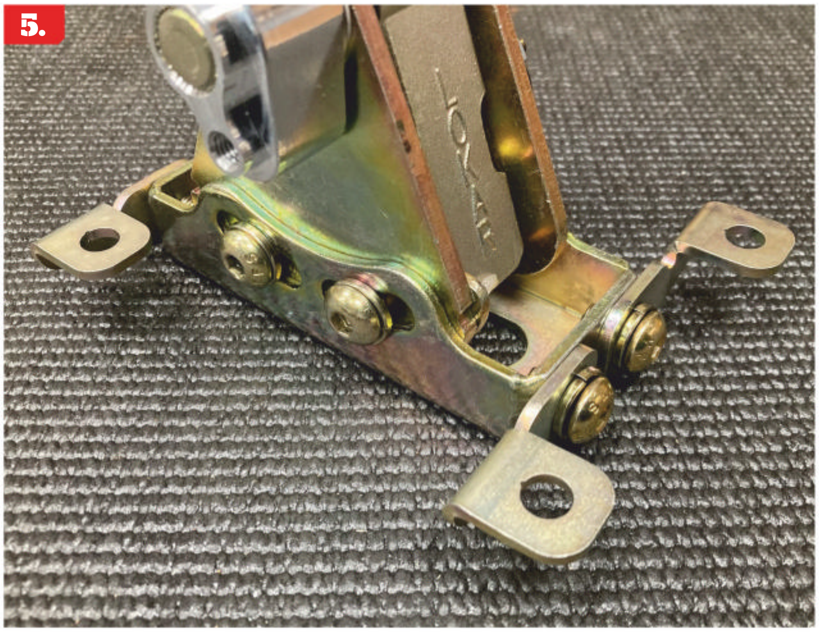

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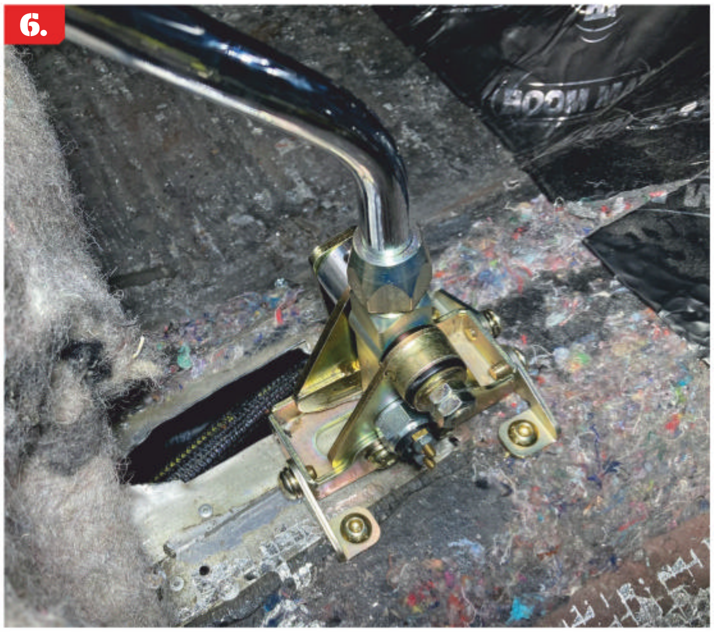

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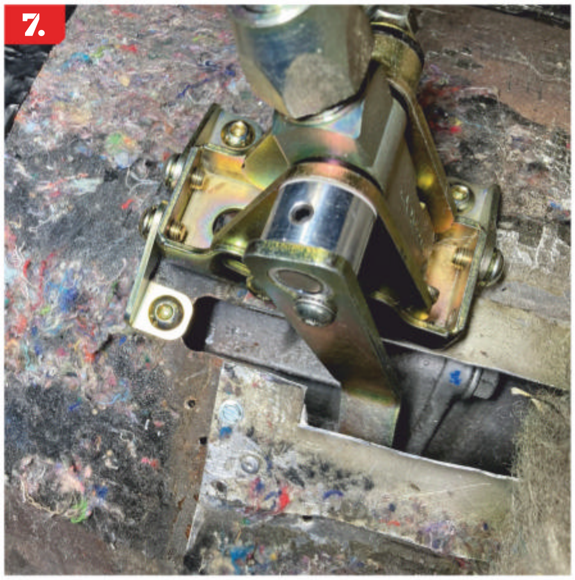

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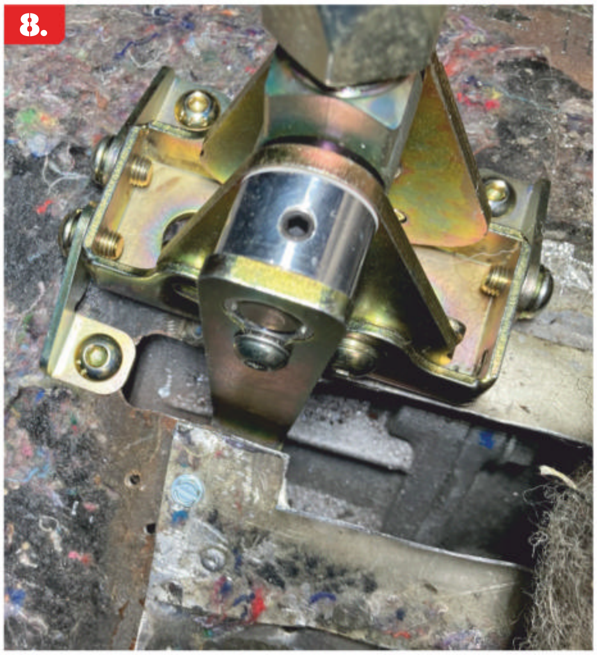

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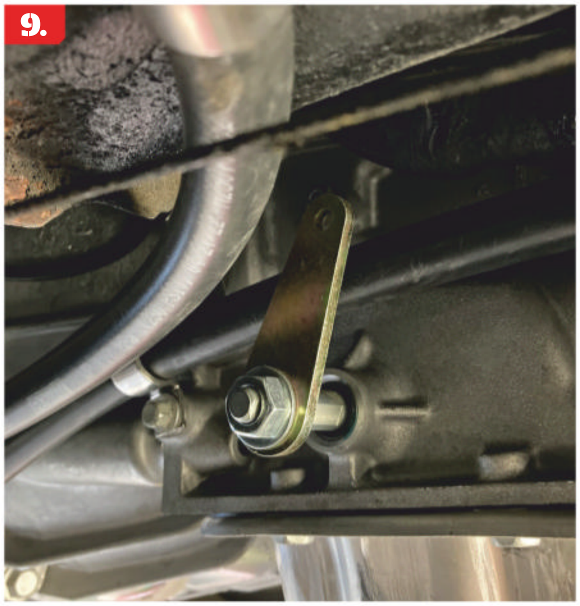

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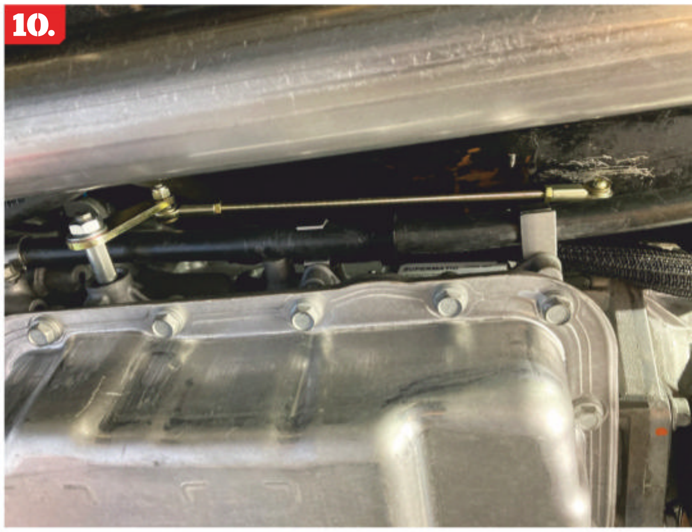

5. Next, the floor mount tabs are loosely attached to the floor-mount mounting bracket. This example shows the shifter setup for an underfloor mount installation.

6. Given our situation, we opted to flip the floor mount tabs around, mounting the shifter on top of the floor.

7. With the shifter bolted in place, it's time to cut the slot for the quad-shift lever and check for clearance. In Park, the quad-shift lever should be pointing rearward in a 4:30 to 5 o'clock position. If the lever isn't pointed toward the aforementioned position, the quad-lever bushing can be removed and repositioned on the splined shaft.

8. Clearance in the floor should be such that the shifter can be moved through its entire length of travel without any contact. Note that we oriented the floor mount tabs inward so as to clear the trim ring of the shift boot we'll be using. In a typical install, there would be a fourth mount tab that, if oriented inward, would contact the shift lever. In our case, a previous owner cut the floor out for a Muncie shifter, so we're only able to use three mounting tabs.

9. With the transmission in Park, a provided trans gear lever is installed on the transmission selector shaft, resulting in a slightly up and rearward (1 o'clock) position.

10. The provided threaded rod will connect the quad shift lever to the trans gear lever. With both the transmission and the shifter in Park, the center-to-center distance between the ¼-inch holes in the two levers is measured and noted. Subtracting 1¾ inches gives us the final length for which the threaded rod is trimmed. A ¼-inch-28 jam nut is installed at each end, followed by a pair of rod ends. The threaded rod assembly is attached to the levers, adjusted evenly at each end so that the rod assembly installs without any bind and without any movement of either lever.

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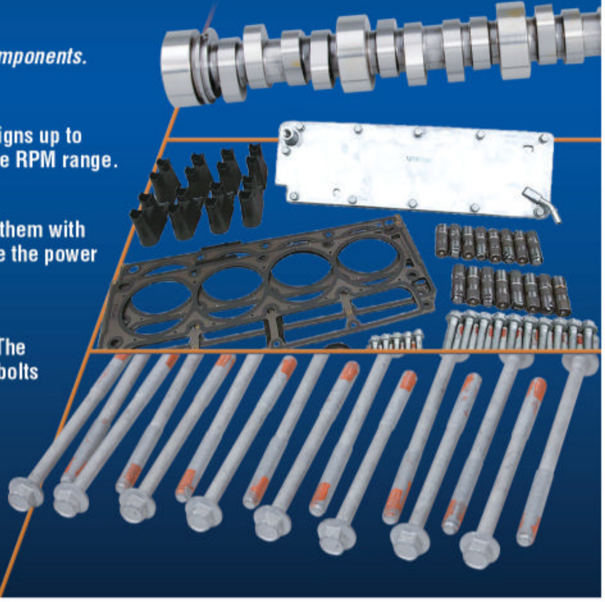

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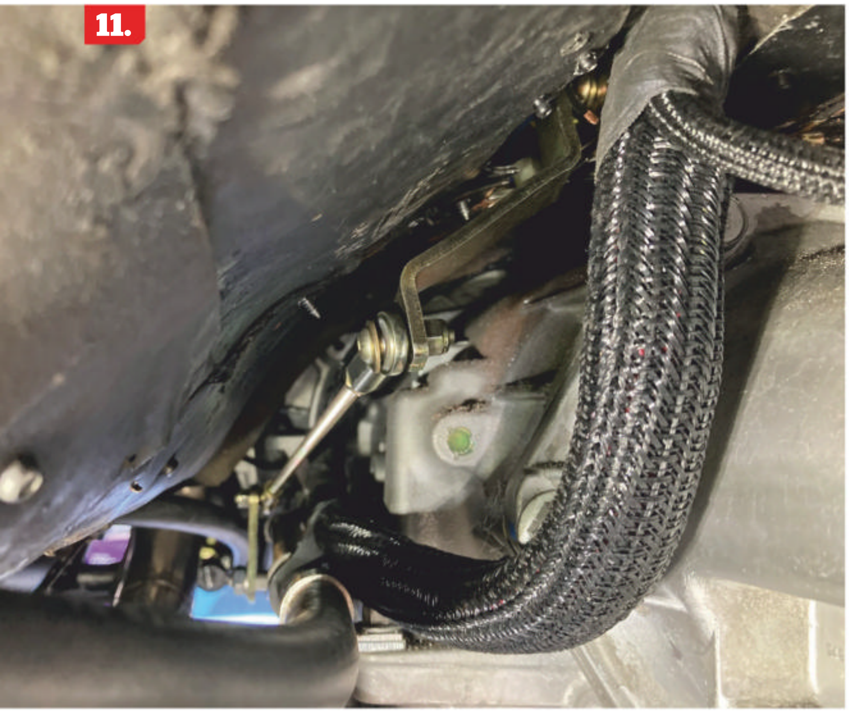

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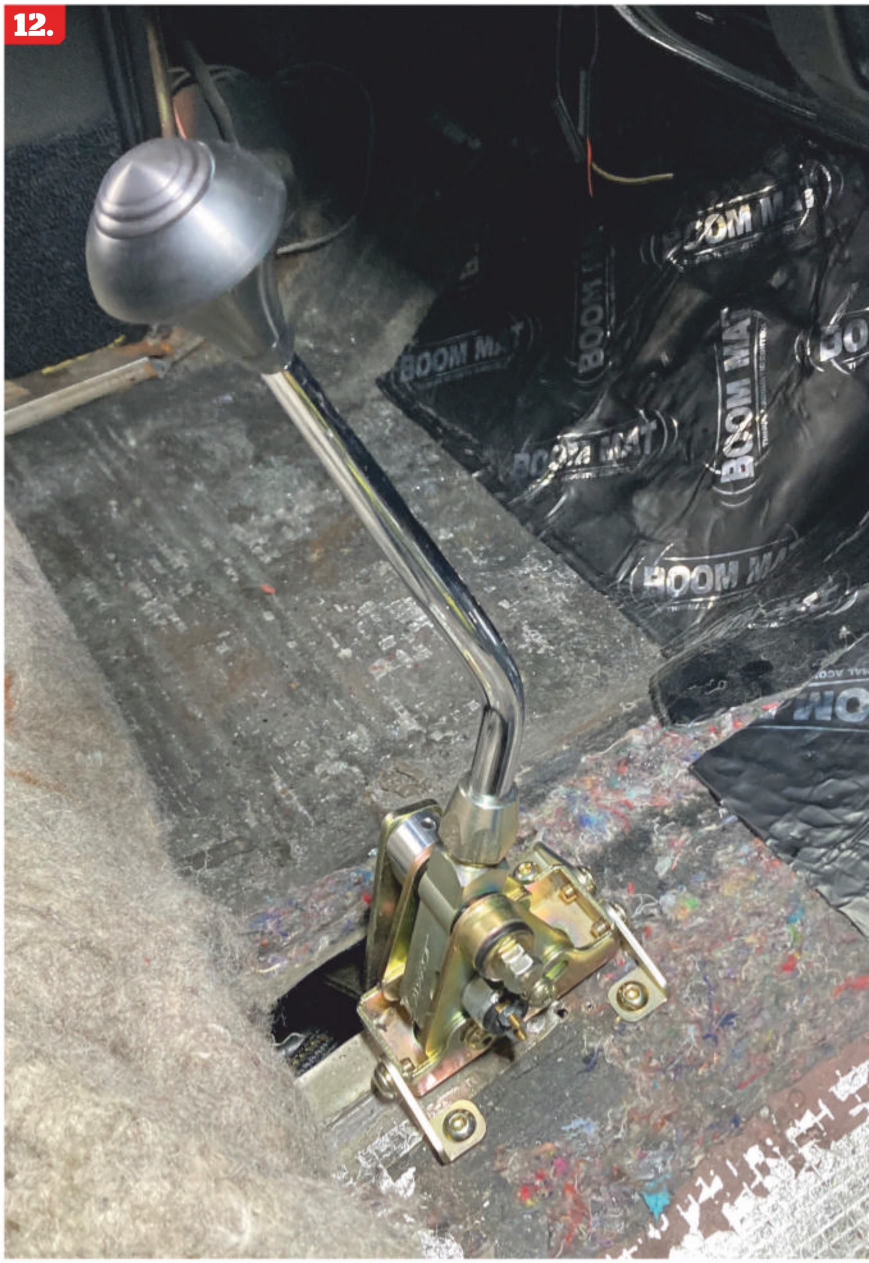


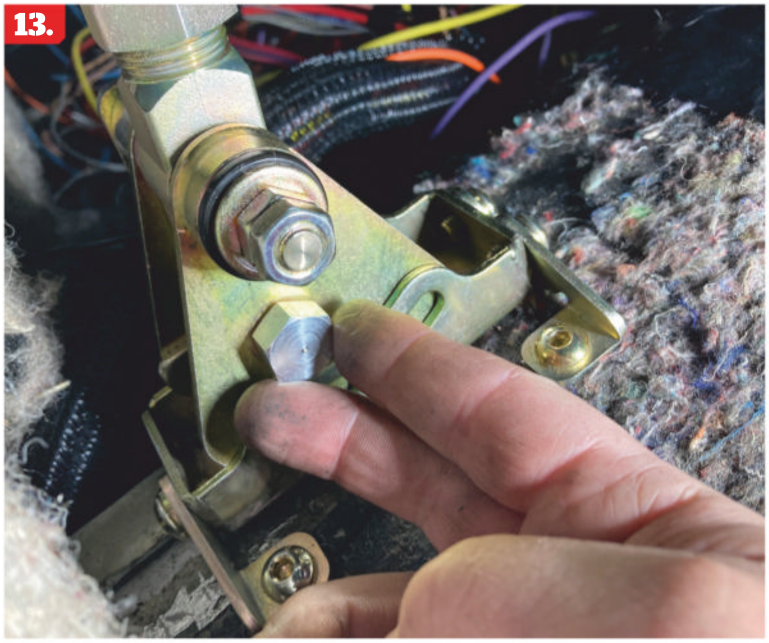
11. Some slight tweaking may be necessary to ensure the assembly is free to travel its entire range of motion without any contact.

12. Up top, the range of the shifter is checked as well to ensure there is plenty of space between the dash in Park and the seat in low.

13. Our Lokar shifter is equipped with a built-in neutral safety switch, but it needs to be adjusted slightly so that it operates as designed. Lokar provides an aluminum adjuster plug that can be utilized, once the neutral safety switch has been removed, to line up the switch plate with the center groove in the shifter body with the shifter in the Reverse position. This is done by loosening the two fasteners that attach the passenger's side of the floor-mount mounting bracket to the switch plate and moving the switch plate slightly while the adjuster plug is slowly screwed into the switch plate, centering the two. The two side fasteners are then tightened, locking down the assembly.

14. Proper operation of the neutral safety switch can be accomplished using a Multimeter by testing for continuity across the two studs in all gears. Continuity should only be detected when the shifter is in Park and Neutral.

13.



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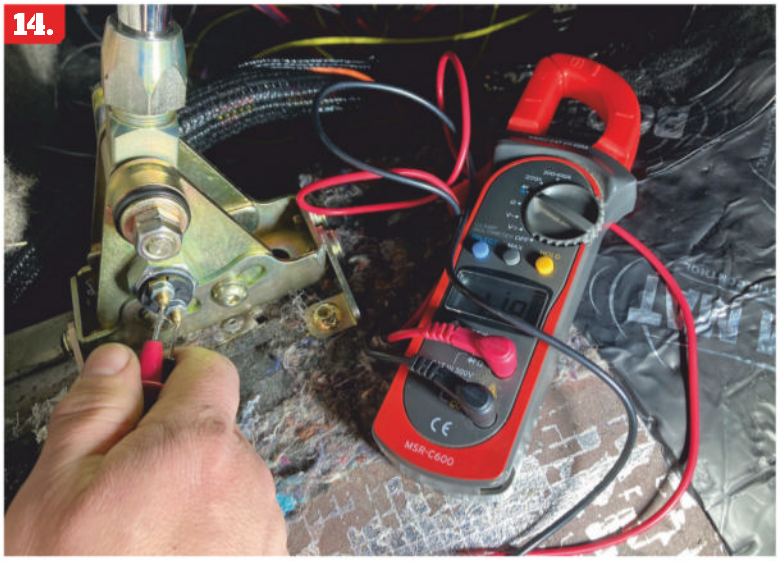

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15. Valley's 1957 was equipped with a Muncie four-speed when it rolled into the Clampdown Competition headquarters. The conversion to an automatic overdrive transmission meant that the clutch pedal would no longer be needed. Instead, a single Lokar brake pedal arm assembly (PN XBCA-9511) could be used along with a Lokar DBW pedal (PN XBDBW-GM06) and Restomod pedal pad (PN XDBW-011RM). With a few minor modifications, a matching Restomod brake pedal pad (PN XBAG-014RM) could be used, resulting in a much-improved pedal setup. Here, the components for he Lokar 1955-1957 Chevy Brake Pedal assembly is shown.

16. Before the new Lokar brake pedal can be installed, the original pedal assembly needs to be removed and a few components set aside for reuse.

17. The original brake pedal axle and return spring is used in conjunction with a Delrin spacer assembled onto the Lokar pedal.

18. Once installed, the brake pedal arm clevis will mate the pedal to the master cylinder pushrod.

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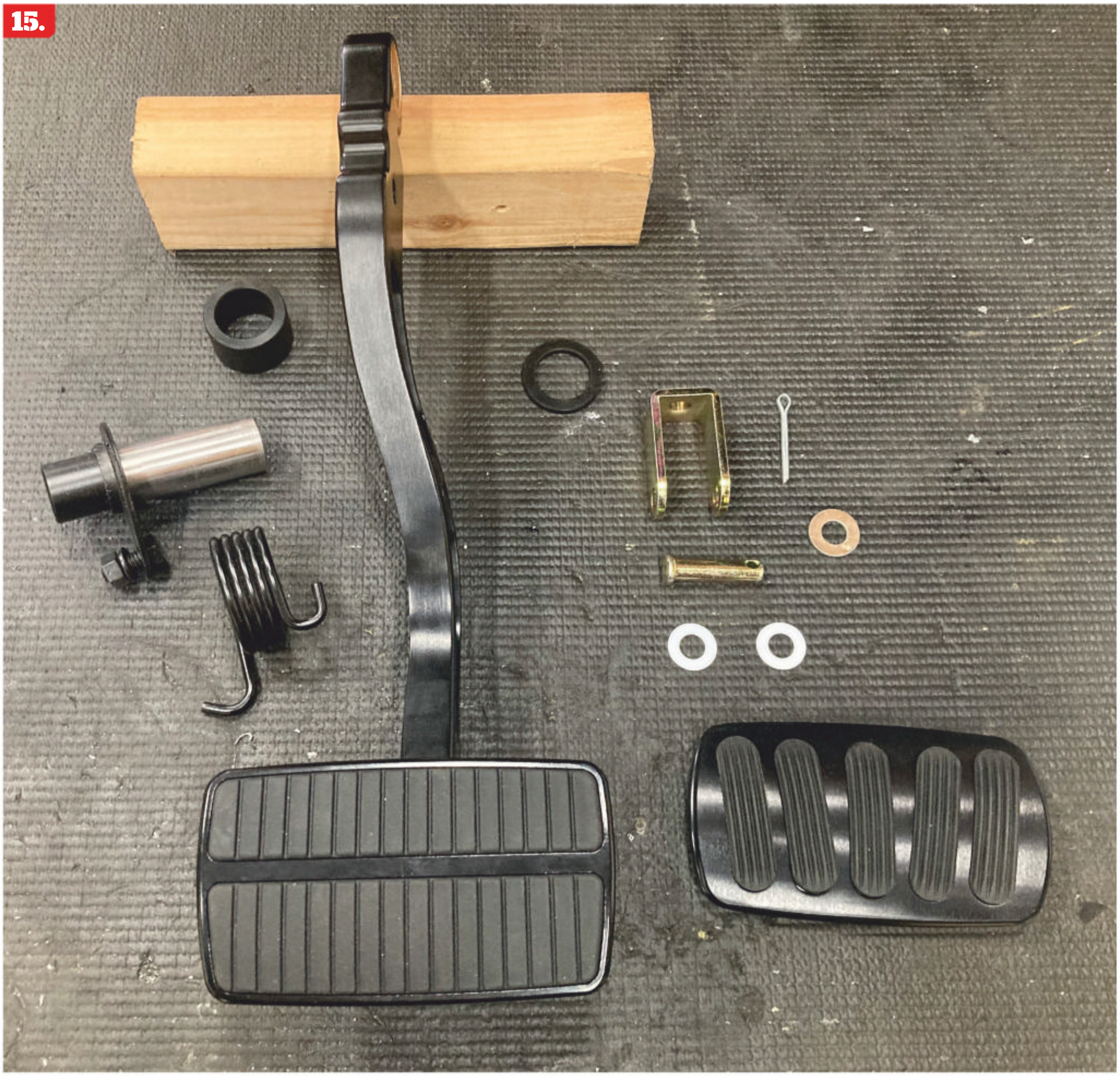

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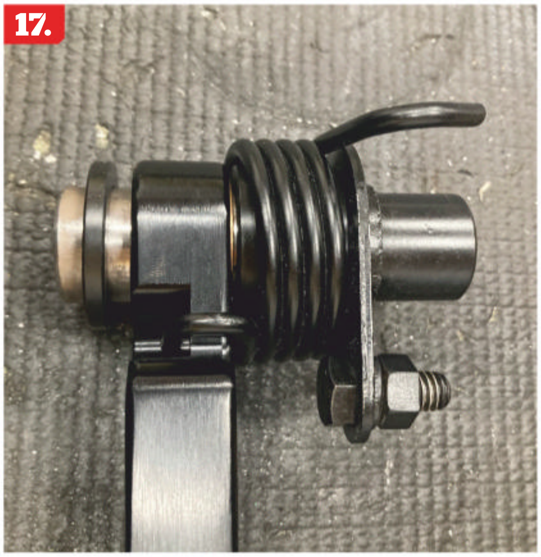

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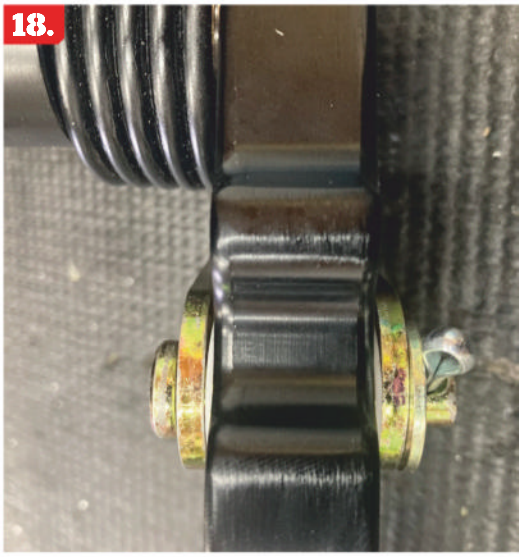

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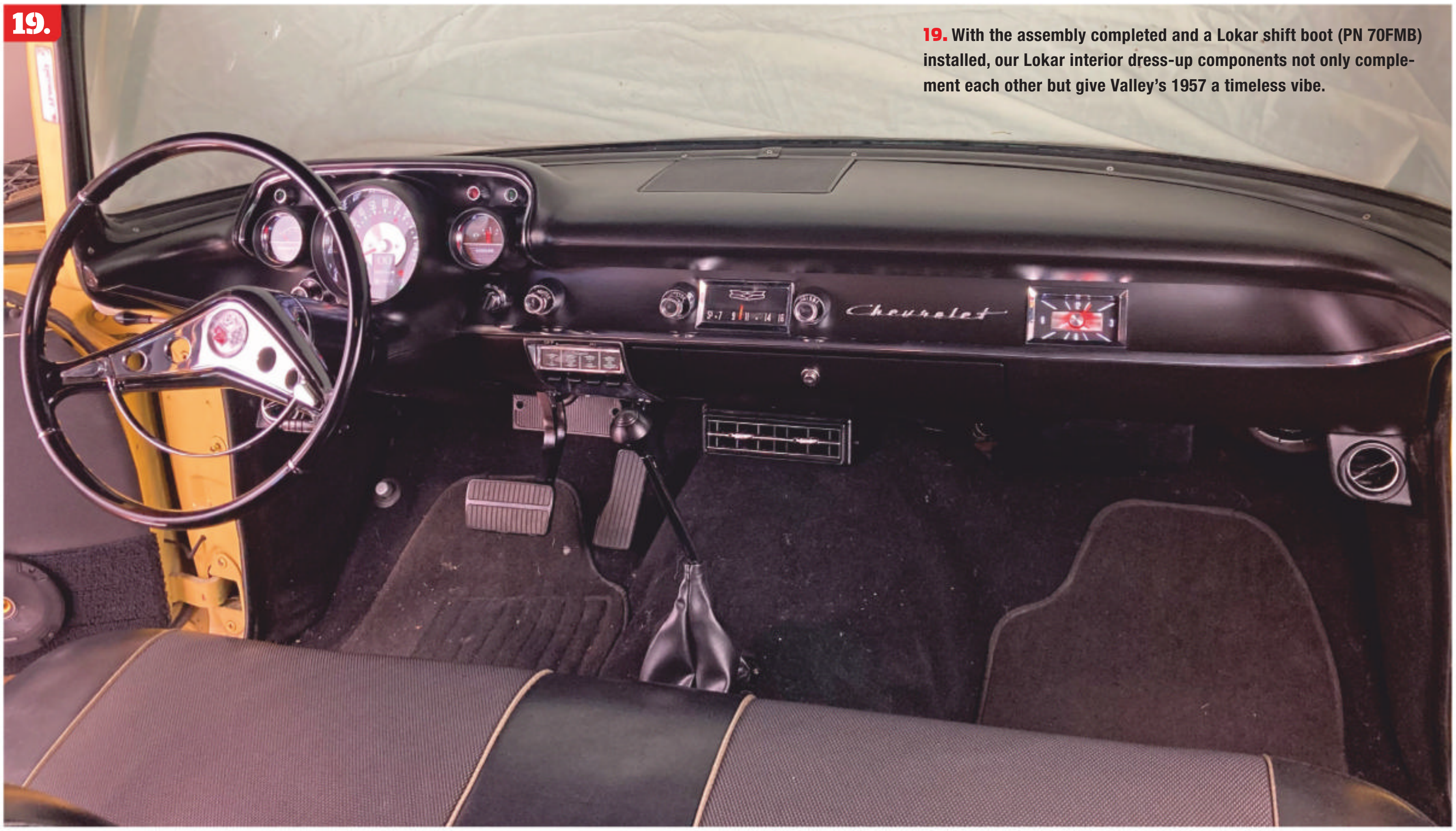

19. With the assembly completed and a Lokar shift boot (PN 70FMB) installed, our Lokar interior dress-up components not only complement each other but give Valley's 1957 a timeless vibe.

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BY **SCOTTY LACHENAUER** IMAGES BY **THE AUTHOR**

When Domenick "Dom" Genise of Oceanside, New York, started his latest Camaro project, there was no question as how this F-body was going to be built. "I always wanted to build a first-gen Camaro that I could just jump in and hit the highway. The car was going to be a restomod, set up with a modern drivetrain and suspension, so I would have no worries regarding reliability while out on the road," Dom states.

PULLING MUSCLE FROM A SHELL

DOMENICK GENISE'S 1969 CAMARO

Now, Dom is no rookie to the Chevy ponycar platform. "I grew up in Maspeth, Queens, and my dad owned a motorcycle shop in nearby Woodside. We always worked on our cars and bikes outside in our yard. My brother was a Ford enthusiast, so we were always in competition since I was a diehard Chevy guy," Dom reflects. "Back then I had a 1967 Camaro that I worked on but never got on the road. I ended up selling it to buy an Electric Blue 1986 IROC Camaro."

As the years passed, Dom dreamed of getting another Camaro. In 2002 he got married and started a family soon after. They ended up moving to Long Island 16 years ago to raise their two kids. That pushed him even harder to build a reliable muscle car that he could put the family in to hit car shows and cruises.

So, Dom took his time locating a good starting point for his build and found a stripped 1969 Camaro shell ready to be transformed into the big-power Chevy of his dreams. Luckily, the empty carcass was once a frame-off, Pro Touring machine, which was in good shape when the work started.

From there Dom kicked the build into high gear and reached out to Dave "Hemi Dave" Kogan of Kogan Motorsports in nearby Island Park, New York, to handle the task of bringing this barren shell back to life. The build started with an Art Morrison Enterprises Camaro/Firebird GT Front Sport Clip with C6 Corvette Z06 suspension specs along with a rack-and-pinion steering up front. Out back is an AME Tri-Four Bar rear setup with a Ford 9-inch rearend stuffed with 3.55 gears. Kogan modified and welded together the front and rear suspensions to make a complete subframe for top-notch handling and stability.

Once the underpinnings were finished, Kogan united the Camaro body to its newly modified chassis. To do this, he basically cut open the underside of the fuselage and slid the body over the frame, giving the Camaro a channeled effect, which pushed the Chevy's body much closer to the ground.

Next up, Dom sent the Camaro to Patrick Napolitano at BonaFide Auto Collision Inc. in Patchogue, New York, where the body went through an extensive makeover. First off, the car's rust issues that are typical on Northeast cars were taken care of by stitching in replacement sheetmetal patches in several places. The fenders and front fascia were then welded together to smooth out the lines on the nose, while the rear bumper was fit tight into the body for a flowing look.

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140
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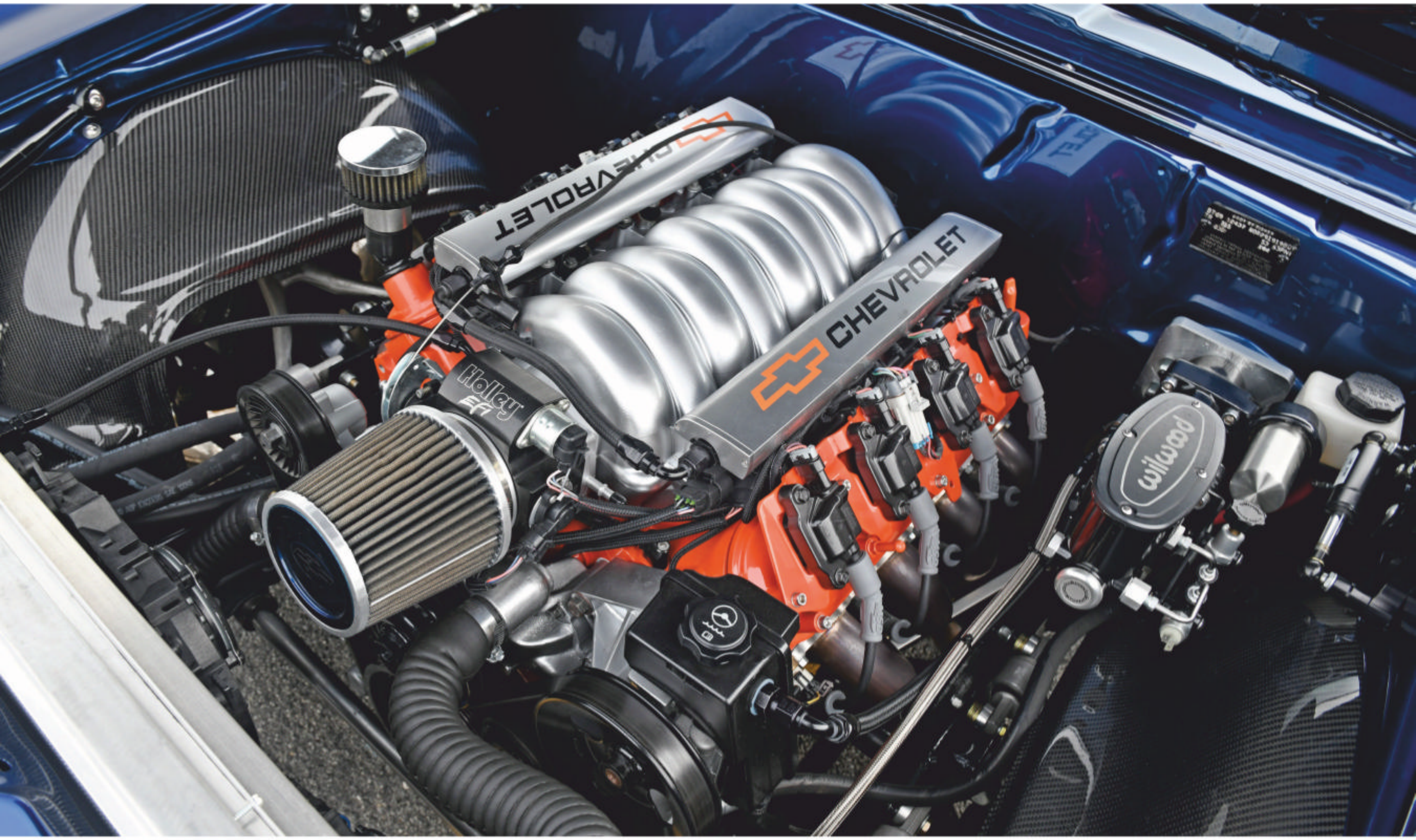

The firewall was smoothed to create a fetching place for the future powerplant; mini-tubs were installed out back to accommodate the massive wheel-and-tire combo. Other custom add-ons include carbon-fiber fenderwells, a carbon-fiber front valance, and a rear spoiler to give the Camaro that all-important Pro Touring look. Once the car was laser straight, BonaFide sprayed on a layer of Axalta Midnight Blue to the Camaro's flanks. Flight Line Aircraft Detailing in Teterboro, New Jersey, finished off by treating the body with P&S Ceramic Coating materials.

After some thought, Dom and Kogan decided that an LS3 would be the perfect powerplant for this striking Camaro. The 6.2L engine got several key upgrades, including a beefy bumpstick from Comp Cams, head and intake porting done by Kogan himself, and an MSD Atomic EFI setup. American Racing headers and custom 3-inch stainless exhaust topped with American Racing mufflers efficiently expel spent fuel while producing an awesome growl throughout the entire rpm range. Once complete, Kogan fine-tuned the engine to deliver 525 hp to the rear wheels along with 500 lb-ft of tire-shredding torque.

A TREMEC T56 Magnum six-speed transmission paired with a McLeod twin-disc clutch ensures smooth and accurate gear changes, while a hydroboost brake-assist system combined with Wilwood disc brakes at all four corners brings this beast to a halt with ease. The car rides on Weld Racing SS7 wheels, measuring 18x8 in the front and 18x10 in the rear, wrapped in Nitto Extreme Nt555 tires (265/35-R18) up front and massive Extreme Drag tires (335/30-R18) out back.

To enhance the interior appearance of Dom's Camaro, he enlisted Bux Customs from Pottstown, Pennsylvania. Owner Chris McClintock took charge designing and executing a full custom interior to complement the build's overall theme. A custom back seat was crafted to accommodate the rear tubs. It was a challenge, but McClintock's vast experience made it look easy. The bucket seats up front were built from the original frames and tailored to Dom's specifications. The interior features Relicate leather in Graphite and Carbon Black tones. Additional features include Vintage Air, power windows, a Kicker KMC2 audio system, a custom console, hand-fabricated door panels, and black Daytona Weave carpet.

Once complete, Dom was floored by the outcome. "The car is everything I expected. It has a classic look with modern driving capabilities. It's a turnkey cruiser with A/C that I take to car shows with my wife and two kids, and we all love it! It grips the road in such a way that I can take sharp turns with confidence knowing the road-hugging suspension and grippy tires will do their job. And long-distance drives are never a problem as the car was also built with reliability in mind. I just fill'er up and drive." ACP

TECH ✓

OWNER: Domenick Genise, Oceanside, New York
VEHICLE: 1969 Camaro

Engine

TYPE: LS3
DISPLACEMENT: 6.2L (376 ci)
COMPRESSION RATIO: 10.7:1
BORE: 4.065
STROKE: 3.622
CYLINDER HEADS: OEM-ported by Kogan Motorsports (Island Park, NY)
CAMSHAFT: Comp Cams
INDUCTION: MSD Atomic EFI
EXHAUST: American Racing Headers, custom 3-inch stainless exhaust, American mufflers
ASSEMBLY: Kogan Motorsports
ACCESSORY DRIVE: Factory
ANCILLARIES: Anvil Auto valance panel, Righbrothers hood hinges, shaved firewall
OUTPUT: 525 hp

Drivetrain

TRANSMISSION: TREMEC T56
CLUTCH: McLeod twin disc
REAR AXLE: Ford 9-inch rear with 3.55 gears

Chassis

FRONT SUSPENSION: AME GT Front Sport Clip with C6 Corvette Z06 suspension, rack-and-pinion steering, JRi coilover shocks
REAR SUSPENSION: AME Tri-Four Bar, JRi coilover shocks
BRAKES: Wilwood 14-inch rotors, six-piston calipers front, Wilwood 12-inch rotors, four-piston calipers rear, hydroboost braking system

Wheels & Tires

WHEELS: Weld Racing SS7 (18x8 front, 18x10 rear)
TIRES: Extreme ZR NT555 265/35-R18 front, Extreme Drag 335/30-R18 rear

Interior

UPHOLSTERY: Relicate leather
INSTALLATION: Bux Customs (Pottstown, PA)
SEATS: Stock with custom padding front, custom-built rear
STEERING: Flaming River column and steering wheel
SHIFTER: Hurst
DASH: Custom dash insert
INSTRUMENTATION: Auto Meter Phantom white face gauges
HVAC: Vintage Air
ENTERTAINMENT: Kicker KMC2

Exterior

BODYWORK AND PAINT: BonaFide Auto Collision (Patchogue, NY)
PAINT: Axalta Hot Hues CFX line Midnight Blue, Spies Heckler 8035 clear
HOOD: Cowl
MINI-TUBS: Detroit Speed
GRILLE: Stock blacked out
DOOR HANDLES: 2000 Impala reversed sides
FRONT BUMPER: Anvil carbon-fiber front valence
REAR BUMPER: Stock modified and tucked
HEADLIGHTS: Ringbrothers LED
TAILLIGHTS: Ringbrothers LED
SIDE MIRROR: InTek OTTO billet and carbon fiber
MODIFICATIONS: Carbon-fiber inner fenders, lower front spoiler, and rear spoiler

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SHOWTIME IN LAS VEGAS

SEMA 2024

BY NICK LICATA ◣ IMAGES BY **THE AUTHOR**

The 2024 SEMA Show in Las Vegas, the aftermarket automotive industry's most highly anticipated event, once again dazzled with cutting-edge custom vehicle innovations, professional builds, and the latest aftermarket performance products. Held annually at the Las Vegas Convention Center, the SEMA (Specialty Equipment Market Association) Show is where car enthusiasts, manufacturers, and industry professionals converge to showcase, learn, and celebrate the latest in automotive technology, design, and performance.

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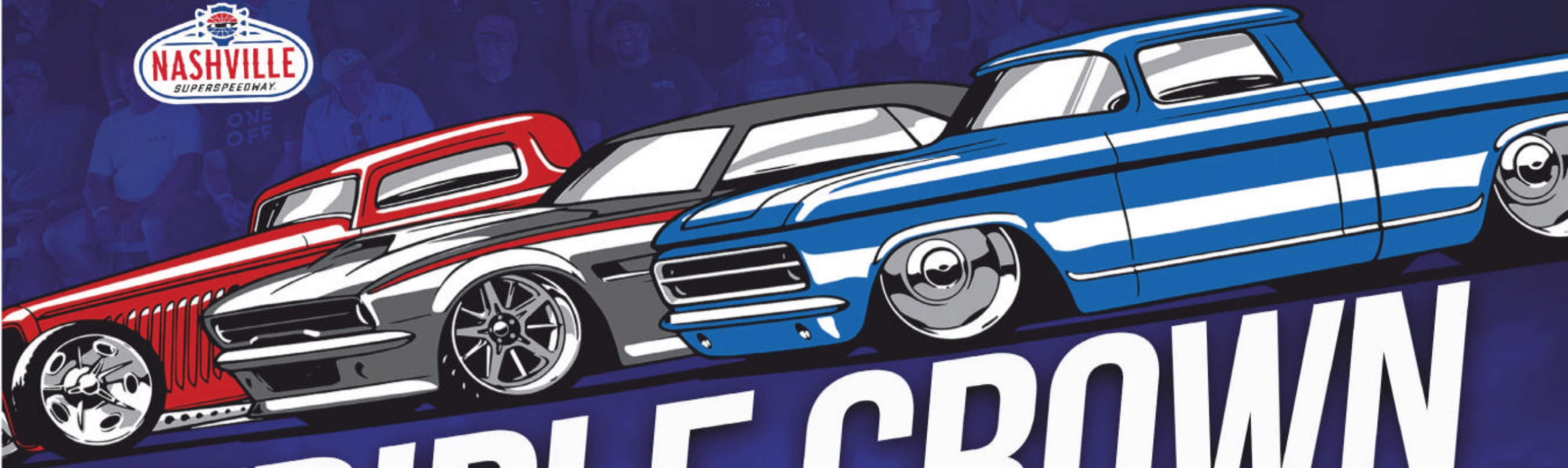

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The SEMA Show caters to automotive diversity in exhibits, with over 2,300 companies showcasing everything from high-tech audio systems, the latest performance parts, to mind-boggling electronic vehicle technology, and that's just scratching the surface. But the highlight of the event for us Chevy enthusiasts was previewing some of the most innovative Chevy muscle car builds on the show grounds—most being shown publicly for the very first time.

The 2024 show featured an impressive lineup of vehicles, and this year's builders brought their A-game, which included everything from highly modified, vintage muscle cars to relatively tame-appearing rides—most backed up with the latest innovations in performance products. SEMA has always been a gateway where traditional and modern automotive worlds collide, and 2024 continued this trend by blending classic style with modern performance underhood while combining the latest in suspension technology designed for accurate road-gripping performance—creating a recipe to build the Chevy of your dreams.

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Beyond the product exhibits and vehicle displays, the SEMA Show offers numerous educational sessions and networking opportunities. Attendees can engage in seminars and workshops led by industry experts, covering topics like marketing, new technology, and business strategies.

The SEMA Show's storied history goes back over 55 years, and today remains an incredibly important event allowing automotive builders, industry insiders, and enthusiasts to stay on top of the latest aftermarket offerings designed to keep the passion of performance car enthusiasts worldwide in high gear.

We hope you enjoy this pictorial featuring some of the coolest Chevys we came across at the 2024 SEMA show. Taking in all of this automotive eye candy is sure to motivate you to keep working on your current project, while giving you inspiration for your next.

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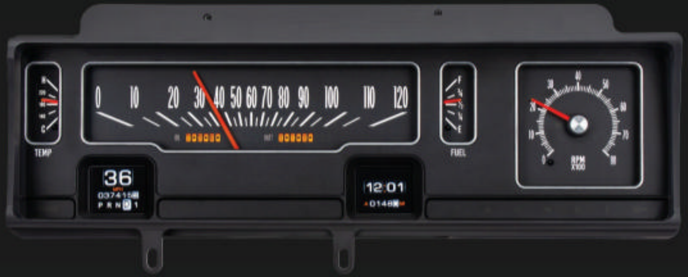

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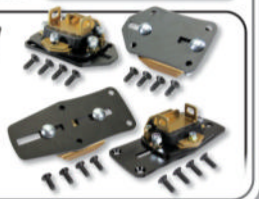

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